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Hancock County

Tri-Centennial

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by

Dan Ellis

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An Invitation:

The Reader is cordially invited to improve upon this history by submitting tales, folklore, and legends. If an error is found for recommended correction, please send evidence or reference for its proper deletion or modification.

The Reader is also encouraged to send photographs, maps, and or, diagrams. These will be returned upon request.

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First Edition: November 1997
Second Edition: December 1997

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INTRODUCTION

The Book -- by Dan Ellis

Having read just about every book and reference that has been available pertaining to Hancock County, Bay St. Louis, Waveland and Piney Woods history, I am grateful for the assistance rendered during several years of research.

Having welcome access to the archival files of the Hancock County Historical Society gave me good cause to relish the ongoing involvement of furthering my research pertaining to this renowned community. Both, Charles Gray and Karen Flores were very supportive in giving their time and making resources readily available. Having written numerous articles, and several books about Mississippi's Gulf Coast communities, I am most pleased to render this new historical release.

The material gathered from the earliest historic incidents was garnered from many resource documents and interviews. Much of the information was also sifted from newspaper clippings amassed in the Historical Society's Web Site. This produced some interesting material to work with. Gratefully, many of the photographs came from Ken Murphy, Bob Hubbard and other parishioners who faithfully answered the call to browse through their attics and closets. Very helpful also, was and is, the staff members at the County Court Houses of Hancock and Harrison as well as the Hancock County Public Library System. I always find, with great elation, that the staff personnel put forth every effort to be supportive.

The Cover -- Hancock County Courthouse

Following the Civil War in 1867, the County Seat was removed from Gainesville and established at Shieldsborough (Bay St. Louis). The wooden frame Courthouse was constructed in 1874 and was later renovated to appear as it is shown on the cover. The "old frame courthouse" was removed in 1911 and replaced by the current standing building. The building was sold for $150 at auction, and the picket fence and posts were sold for $5.

Legend has it that a courthouse at Shieldsboro had actually been built earlier than documented. It supposedly had concrete sidewalks, on which many of the country folk would not walk upon because they had never before seen a sidewalk.

Bay St. Louis and Hancock County
Tri-Centennial --- 1699 - 1999

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The Gulf Coast
Tri-Centennial

1699 to 1999

Welcome to the Gulf Coast! Welcome to this near-tropic abode of sun, sea and white sand. Welcome to this country abounding in beautiful tall pines, moss-layered water oaks and fragrant magnolias. Welcome to the land of hospitality!

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is steeped in history which unfolds for the past 300 years with legends and myths of the early Indians, French, Spanish, and English. The Coast is the original "melting-pot" of many nationalities and races learning to meld and mix. Many of the eighteenth century Spanish, French and English original settlers moved on to what they felt were greener pastures in New Orleans, Mobile and Natchez. But some did remain to fish and eke out a living from the sandy soil, forming the nucleus of many of the area's large clans; . . . such as the Favres, Ladners, Cuevases, Sauciers, Necaises, Morans, Dedeaux, and many others. Just as the native Indians were intermingled with the early settlers, so were the ensuing generations populated by the African Americans and the Polish, Irish, Greek, and Dalmatian workers who were brought in to work the fish canneries. For the past 150 years, the Coastal cities have become resorts beckoning tourists from all over the States to come and refresh. Many visitors have come back again and again and again.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast has long been a world unto itself . . . admired and enjoyed by a continuous stream of tourists, but deeply loved by its residents. A rich and colorful history, a happily blended population and its spectacular beachfront has combined to create something Coastians feel is quite special.

The sister cities of the Gulf Coast are like pearls held together by a ribbon of sand beaches extending from the West, accessing New Orleans within one hour and to the East, accessing Mobile by an hour. Along the Coast, each City's corporate limits abut the next. Very little can be realized by the Newcomer unless they visit each community in savoring the differences. The Gulf Coast Country has a quality of smallness. It spans along the Mississippi Sound on both sides of the Bay of St. Louis and pervades about five miles inland from the Gulf.

The Mississippi Sound cradles the Gulf Coast Mississippi shoreline reinforced by the barrier islands, which add beauty and safety by protection from the numerous storms which abound. The barrier islands also provide a haven for water fowl and an harborage for many varieties of fish.

As each community holds hands with the next, from Waveland, Bay St. Louis and on to Pascagoula at the eastern end; the journey is replete with Sun, Sea and Sand spawning a radiance all along the Gulf Coast Country. While driving along Hospitality Highway, the traveler can relish the splendor and magnificence of Antebellum homes dotting the shorefront. And offshore are the barrier islands . . . Cat, Ship, and the Louisiana Chandeleur chain.

The Mississippi Sound has proved to be a bountiful breeding ground for shrimp, oysters, crabs and edible fish of every description. Each community supports its own safe-harbor or small craft marina with awaiting adventures in water sports, while unrevealed and hidden within the tall pines north of the shore are manicured Golf courses all along its traverse. For these and many more reasons, folks from all over the United States have been selecting Gulf Coast Mississippi beach havens as their choice for retirement. The inducements are many . . . Just ask anyone!

The Founders

The first explorers were the Spanish and the Portuguese, who in the 1500s, mapped the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. The Spaniard DeSoto is credited as being the first European to encounter the flowing Mississippi River having traversed the present State of Mississippi in 1542. The early French influence in the New World was in Canada having founded Quebec in 1608. Father Marquette and Joliet initiated explorations of the Mississippi valley followed by De La Salle's expeditions.

Robert Cavalier de La Salle, a native of Rouen, France, bought provisions using his personal resources in order to explore the Mississippi valley. His first voyage from Montreal in 1669 was unsuccessful and was followed up in 1680. Finally arriving at the mouth of the river on April 9, 1682, La Salle erected a cross blazoned with the French Coat of Arms and proclaimed formal possession of the Mississippi River and all its tributaries, and of all the lands, in the name of Louis XIV, King of France. He named the lands Louisiana.

This French map appears to be one of the earliest, emphasizing the passes into the Mississippi River and the short cut passage from the Iberville River, through Lake Maurepas, and Lake Pontchartrain. The Jourdan River was then called Riviere St. Germain.

The French had a penchant for immediately christening everything they discovered. LaSalle's final voyage by way of the Gulf of Mexico was unsuccessful as he attempted to find the Mississippi's mouth.

The baton was passed to Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, of French Canada. According to *Iberville's Journals*, he was instructed by King Louis XIV, to "go to the Gulf of Mexico, locate the mouth . . . select a good site that can be defended with a few men, and block entry to the river by other nations."

Aware of English commitments to establish a trading post upon the banks of the mouth of the Mississippi, Iberville made the first move. He commissioned and outfitted the *Badine*, the *Marin* and several slower vessels called *Travasiers* or transports. With careful

discretion and determination, he selected his men. With a prime staff including his brother, Bienville; he picked Spanish-speaking Frenchmen, Spanish deserters from Mexico, and other French Canadian *voyageurs.* He ordered trade items for the Indians and stored many guns and ammunition. He was prepared to fight the English if for any reason he didn't arrive at the Gulf before them.

They left from Brest, France in October of 1698 and arrived at the Spanish controlled island of Santo Domingo in January of 1699. Spending just enough time to take on new provisions and hiring fresh local hands, they started searching the coast lines westward delving into each water inlet in search of the mouth of the Mississippi. Frustrating his journeys were faulty charts and journals as described by the former explorations of La Salle and old Portuguese maps. Painstakingly, during his exploring expeditions he designed new journals and charts with the help of native Indians. Encountering Spanish ships in the Pensacola harbor they continued westward, arriving at the Bay of Mobile. During each careful scrutiny along the way, Iberville would raise crosses and cut the bark of trees to establish their presence. Further west they encountered Horn Island which was so named because a soldier had lost his powder horn during a landing. They encountered Ship Island on February 10, 1699 wherefrom they made foraging landings on the mainland to make contact with the Indians. On communicating with the natives, they were told of the Mississippi River further west and set sail once more to investigate Cat Island on March 1st and from their, they continued to the Mississippi.

This early French Map was used to promote the interest of European settlers to the new French controlled territories.

Because of the large numbers of racoons, the French called the island *Isle-aux-Chats* or Cat Island. Some historical reviews suggest that the French, on seeing so many racoons, assumed them to be a progeny of cats. However, authoritative researchers signal that the Canadian French were quite astute in their knowledge of furred animals, including raccoons, which they called *chats sauvages* or *chats-aux-huîtres*. Often, the raccoons would fish the shores seeking to eat the oysters *(huîtres)*. They would insert their claws to crack open the oyster shells in prying for food. By chance, one would get their claws caught between the locked shells and would be compelled to await the change of tide, which would often result in their drowning.

On Monday, March 2, 1699, as a storm was pounding the schooner, the French, in attempting to seek haven, coincidentally discovered the mouth of the Mississippi River. The following day they celebrated Mardi Gras with a catholic mass and raised a cross as a symbol of their manifestation. Here, they planted one of a series of the *Fleur-des-Lys*. They traveled upriver in order to verify that the vast body of water was actually the Great Mississippi. They traveled past Baton Rouge and retraced their voyage to return to the Gulf by way of the Rigolets. Iberville realized the need to establish a fort in order to protect their claim to the Mississippi River. This resulted in seeking out a safe harbor with adequate deep waters to anchor their ships. In sounding for a deep-water channel, they favored Biloxi over Lake Pontchartrain or the Bay of St. Louis.

Following the discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi River, Iberville's group ascended the currents and stayed the night in the calm of a bayou. The following morning on March 3, 1699, they celebrated and named the tributary, Mardi Gras Bayou for Fat Tuesday.

During this first venture along the Coast, the French discovered a small tribe of Choctaws living near the Bay of St. Louis. Their village was called *Chicapoula* (or, bad grass). Andre Penicaut, one of the ship's historians, wrote, "On the twelfth of April, 1699, d'Iberville set out to visit a bay about nine leagues from Ship Island, to which he gave the name of St. Louis. But finding the water very shallow there, he concluded to fix his settlement at Biloxi. . . . we hunted there three days and killed fifty deer." On returning to the Bay of St. Louis after a trip up the Mississippi River, Penicaut continued, "We hunted several days around this bay and filled our boats with venison, buffalo and other game."

Some of Bienville's entourage, explored around the coastline of the Bay of St. Louis and penetrated several inlets which they encountered, on the east, *Bayou DeLisle* and the *Riviere des Loups* which is now called Wolf River, and on the west, the *St. Germaine*, now called the Jourdan River, and the *Baneeshewah*, or Rotten Bayou in English. These land and water sketches were roughly drawn and sent to the official map-maker, Guillaume DeLisle, in Paris.

Iberville and Bienville returned to Biloxi Bay where they selected a site for the first settlement on Wednesday, April 8, 1699. They cleared the land and built a fort for protection of the garrison which would remain to protect their claims. This was at Ocean Springs. During the building of the fort, the Indians assembled and five chiefs celebrated for 3 days with dancing and chanting and sounding drums and rattles. One Indian placed his back to Iberville to mount his shoulders as another carried his feet to a planted stake in a sign of peace. The French made alliances with the Indians and taught them how to use tools such as picks and shovels and how to make and replace handles for axes. In turn, the French learned Indian methods for cultivation and how to make dugout canoes.

The Indians performed ritual dances that were called the *Calumet*, customarily with a peace pipe which consisted of a long tubular stick and a pipe-bowl, from which colorful feathers hung. During the dance, as the pipe was passed around to the leaders, drums were beat and *Chichicoises* were rattled in harmony. These were guards filled with pebbles.

The Map of La Louisiane, circa 1722, is one of the first sketches indicating water depths and channel passages along the Gulf shore. Notice the exposed "battures of oyster reefs" northwest of Cat Island. The channel, Pass Christian, was then named *Passe aux Huîtres*, the Oyster Pass.

The Settlers

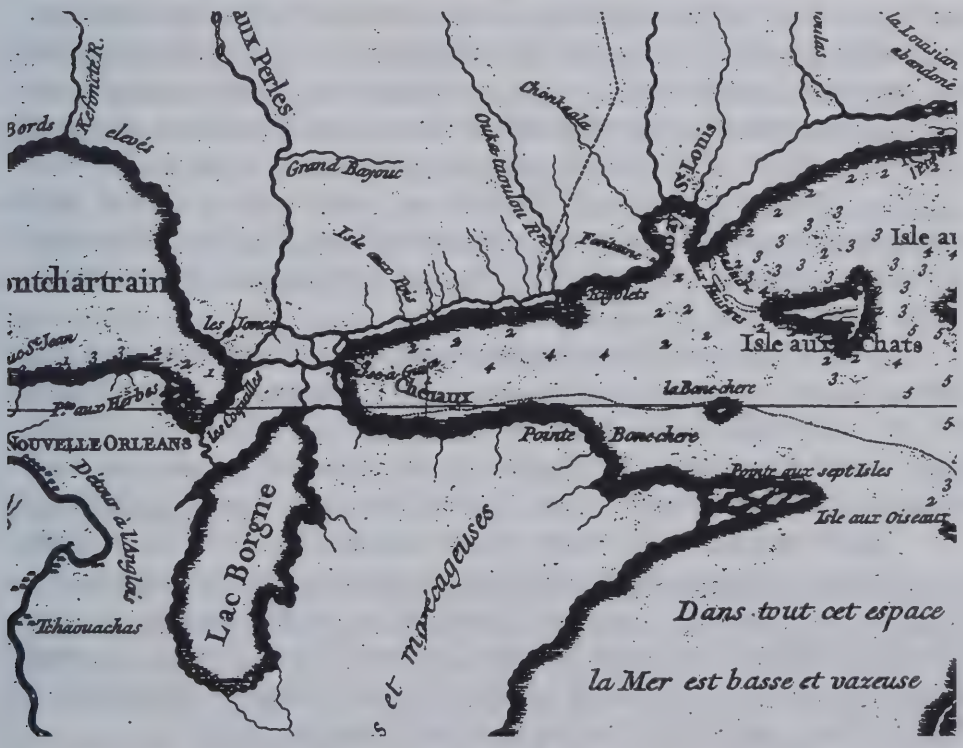
Iberville chose *old* Biloxi as the first Capital of Louisiana in 1699, followed by Mobile, and later a return to *new* Biloxi, and then finally moving the French seat of government to New Orleans. Mobile was founded on January 1702 which, for a brief period, became the center for Indian trade and French diplomacy. In 1704 the *Pelican* arrived with the first of New World brides. Ship's carpenter and historian, Penicaut further described that, "there were twenty-three marriageable girls who were reared in piety and who were drawn from sources above suspicion and who know how to work." These were the forerunners of the Casquette girls. They were the predecessors, too, of a group of "wayward ladies" from a house of correction in Paris who were willing to come to Louisiana in exchange for freedom. Needless

to say, the colonists who desired a European wife were not particular about their prior demeanor.

The French governing officials' primary goal was to seek wealth from the Mississippi region. However, Europe fell into economic hardships due to wars and famine, therefore the early French settled along the coast simply to display their flag and to protect their political dominion from English and Spanish take over. The early inhabitants perceived the sea primarily as a supply route rather than as a source of food. Therefore the early colonists settled mostly in sea-oriented, unkempt villages and depended on trade with the Indians and supplies from France for survival. In time, the early settlers found themselves left to fend for themselves. There was no food or supplies or even trinkets to keep the Indians happy. Eventually, the colonists learned to fish and probe the local oyster beds.

"Large grants of land on the Mississippi, and along this coast, were made by the French government on the condition of colonization. From these efforts and from the Acadians expelled by the English from Nova Scotia following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, and from a few Greek and Minorcan families imported into Florida by the English in 1767, most of the Creole population of this Coast is descended", stated Governor W.C.C. Claiborne in his Journals.

The French Settlers were comprised of French and Canadian soldiers; Craftsmen such as carpenters and millers; the *Voyageurs* were professional Canadian scouts and guides who rowed the canoes and pirogues; *Coureurs du Bois* were Canadian woodsmen and fur trappers; and the *habitans* were settlers who sought to establish homesteads.



This Map of 1732, by Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville, the royal cartographer for King Louis XV. In its complete form, the rivers and Indian villages are depicted in great detail, covering, north to Canada and west to the Rockies.

During the early 1700s, the French spread out along the Coast and invaded the bayous, the bays and the rivers. "The French Canadians were not like the other colonists. From the first days of the settlement, they took the comely Choctaw women as concubines and the young girls of the Natchez and Chickasaw as slaves. They adamantly insisted that they had to have women to do their washing and their cooking, in order to make *sagamité*; and to maintain their cabins. No military order and no religious edict could keep them from the Indian girls. As time passed, small dusky half-breed children were found playing about their cabins. They would grow up to be approved by the blood-tolerant Canadians. As years went by, this fact became concealed as newcomers criticized the practice," as stated by Hodding Carter in *Gulf Coast Country*.

The Indians made Sagamité from corn, which was prepared like a porridge, either thick or soupy, mixed with meat for variety, sometimes even including lizards and snakes when the hunt was poor.

As time passed, several regions along the Coast were being taken up by such originators as Jean Baptiste Nicaise, Chevalier Dedeaux, and Pierre Moran to add to existing settlers such as the Sauciers, the Ladners, the Cuevas, the Favres, the LaFontaines, and many more.

Why did these pioneering people stay? What caused them to fan out over the entire Coastal area to bring about the infra-structure of the sister cities from Bay St. Louis to Pascagoula? These seekers evidently found the peace of *joy de vivres* and Gulf breezes and the greatness of a paradise unfolding. They remained inspite of adversity.

With political restructuring in Europe, the New World lands were becoming influenced by the ensueing war games resulting in Coastal area ownership being shifted from one European national control to another. The British took possession away from the French in 1773. They took some of Florida and some of Louisiana and created the fifteenth colony which they called West Florida. When the original 13 colonies rebelled in 1776, the two Florida colonies remained loyal to King George III of England.

In 1779 the Spanish appropriated the two Floridas hoisting their colors adorned by Lions and Castles. The Spaniards held Louisiana until the year 1800, when it was ceded back to France. Napoleon couldn't hold it against the English so he decided to sell the vast Mississippi Valley territory to the United States on April 30, 1803.

The West Florida Territory which included the Gulf Coast from Baton Rouge to Pensacola, had become settled by a population count of eight to ten thousand, many of whom were Anglo-Americans who primarily inhabited the areas of Natchez and Baton Rouge. Losing patience, many settlers tired of the frequent switching of allegiance to different Flags, resulted in ending the then Spanish reign.

Following 1763, under British Dominion of the Gulf Coast region, and the withdrawal of French troops, the priests also left the territory. Once the British exacted pledges of allegiance from the remaining settlers, the English enforced an isolation which resulted in the inhabitants frequently being in harms way.

The Indians were no longer traded supplies to keep them peaceful. They began to raid the farm sites causing the remaining French *habitans* to flee their settlements. By 1767, the Indians had driven the remaining families from the Bay of St. Louis out to Cat island or to other barrier islands. However, the Hurricane of August 1772, caused the families at Cat Island and other barrier islands to move back to the mainland.

During the period of 1771 to 1773, Captain Bernard Romans, a map maker, wrote about the West Florida region of the Gulf Coast. He described that the settlers grew oranges, grapes, plums, pears and various vegetables. The scarce *habitans* living in the wooded areas learned to produce lumber, pitch, tar, and charcoal from the pine forests, as well as herding pigs and cattle.

Rebelling Americans in Baton Rouge established independence by raising the *Lone Star Flag.* Later, on October 29, 1810, the revolutionaries placed the Mississippi Territory under the jurisdiction of the United States.

This is part of a Map of 1806 showing West Florida, as drawn by the New Orleans cartographer Lafon. Spanish West Florida was situated south of the 31st parallel and established between the Mississippi River to Pensacola with Baton Rouge and St. Francisville included at its western boundary.

In 1812 the district south of the 31st parallel between Pearl River extending to the Bay of Biloxi was made the County of Hancock. It was named for John Hancock, the president of the Continental Congress and first signature on the Declaration of Independence.

To confuse matters further, the State of Georgia, during the whole of this period, also laid claim to nearly all of the Mississippi Territory. They called it the County of Bourbon. When Mississippi was admitted as a State into the Union in 1817, Georgia voted against its admission to Statehood. As a consequence, there have been many legal contests regarding property ownerships over the years due to overlapping land grants to the same territory.

The Indians

The early Spanish and French explorers encountered various tribes along the Gulf coast such as the Bylocchy, Moctoby, Ouma and the Pascoboula (as listed in Iberville's Journals). Near the mouth of the Mississippi River they encountered the Tangipahoa, Mougoulas-chas, and the Bayagoulas; and further upriver they smoked the peace

pipe and celebrated the dance of the *Calumet* with the *Nipissas* and the *Quinipissas*. The Indians called the great Mississippi river the *Malbanchya*. The early Spanish called it the *Rio de Palisades* or *Rio de Espiritu Santo*. The early French called it the St. Louis River, or the Indian name of *Missicipy* or *Myssysypy* as recorded in Iberville's Journals.

One of Iberville's entourage, Andre Penicaut, recorded that "during the spring of 1700, Iberville reported contacts only with small groups (of Indians), a male hunting party in one instance; and small extended families, one of which was traveling with stored maize and beans." Indian villages lay deep in the interior far above the limits of tidewater. Native villages were located well inland and coastal sites were typically dispersed with small, seasonal encampments.

As Iberville and Bienville encountered new Indian tribes, they quickly made allies of them. The normal custom was a 3-day Feast celebrated by the *Dance of the Calumet* when the peace pipe was passed amongst the top leaders. Then gifts were distributed consisting of knives, hatchets, axes, picks and mirrors, rings, beads and trinkets. The Indians would offer food and teach the French Indian cultivation, making of pirogues, and describing the terrain and Indian villages for the map makers.

Choctaws, the descendants of Chief Chakta and his followers, were by far the strongest Indian tribe in Mississippi. They lived in the Central and Southwest regions and covered the southern half of Mississippi. Because the tribe was too large to be ruled by one man, the Choctaws divided their people into three groups each ruled by a chief known as a *Mingo*. Chief Tacala Yarbo ruled the Hancock tribal group from the Devil Swamp's lower central part of the county.

"The Choctaw dispersed in small, presumably family-based, groups in the Spring after the crops were planted. They subsisted on fruit and aquatic foods until the early summer when they returned to the home community for the annual *Green Corn Ceremony*. Following this, they dispersed again until harvest time. After the crops were harvested in the fall, the men were away on the Fall hunt and the remaining villagers gathered nuts and other resources for winter and early spring consumption.", as described by R. Barry Lewis in his *Fires on the Bayous*.

The Indians remained shy of the white man following their encounter with the Spaniard, DeSoto. During DeSoto's 1540s trek along the coast from Florida to the Mississippi River he had killed all Indians he came in contact with. However the French finally made friends with the Indians and by 1730, the Choctaws and the French accepted each other as equals. Intermarriages even produced some Choctaw-Creole leadership as characterized by the famous Chief Greenwood LeFlore.

Through the years, Yellow Fever epidemics, warfare and colonial encroachment, greatly affected the Indian population. When the Indian Removal Act of 1830 was enacted, the tribes east of the Mississippi River were forced to exchange their home lands for new lands in the West. The Choctaws and Chickasaws of Mississippi were

included, as well as the Creeks from Florida. This enforced migration was later called the *Trail of Tears.*

Many of the mix blooded Indians dropped their native names in favor of their European family name and discreetly remained concealed in the wooded areas. Not unusually, these names were Favre, Dedeaux, Cuevas, Ladner, Dubuisson, etc. Farve, or *Favre*, is a common name for many of today's Indians who live in Hancock County.

As reported by Jerry Heitzmann, the first Favre to arrive at the Coast was Jean Baptiste Favre, Jr. originating from Rouen, France. He married his first wife Magdeleine on July 2, 1714 and then to Marie Anne Arlut in 1720. He left four children at his death, one of whom was Jean Claude Favre who was the official Government Interpreter, who during his extensive travels, sired many children. He also produced five legitimate children by his wife Marguerite, a daughter of a Swiss soldier. One of these was Simon Favre who also became an official government interpreter and traveled the whole of Mississippi. His descendants reported to a local genealogist, that Simon had many illegitimate children -- white, red, and black -- scattered from New Orleans to Mobile and throughout eastern Mississippi. Simon Favre settled the along the Pearl River in 1806 following the searchings of his predecessor, Jean Claude Favre, who cultivated some of the area as early as 1767. Simon Favre was sufficiently educated and participated in the negotiations and signing of many Indian Treaties. He also served as one of the four magistrates appointed by Governor W.C.C. Claiborne in 1811. He played a prominent part in currying the Choctaw Nation to the American cause, however, he died before the Battle of New Orleans took place.

Indians are now, few in number along the Gulf Coast. Much of the Indian heritage has been forgotten. However, we might justly remind ourselves that many of the names of towns, counties, rivers and bayous, and even the State name of Mississippi proclaims the omnificense of their progeny.

For the amateur archaeologist or Indian lore seeker there are still traces of native Indian habitat along the Coast. Archaeological components in Mississippi are unfortunately based entirely on the results of limited excavations thereby providing limited data. However, some Indian shell piles called *middens* still have potential historical significance.

Thus, the early Indians that created these mounds, had done so long before DeSoto ever made his *Pasada* or bloody trek from Florida to the Mississippi River in 1541.

Mike Schaefer points to the top of the Indian Burial Mound in his backyard at Diamondhead, which has been certified by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History as having originated during the Middle Woodland Period of prehistory (100 B.C. to A.D. 500). There were exposed mounds along the Bay St. Louis bluffs which have been mostly obliterated.

The Pirates

Another flag had fluttered both ashore as well as throughout the waters along the Gulf Coast. It was the flag of the Pirates. There was the pirate Captain Pitcher, and the infamous Lafitte brothers who scurried throughout all of the water inlets from Grand Isle in Louisiana to the Mississippi barrier islands. Several of Lafitte's kin remained ashore to settle along the villages of the coast. Then, too, there was the King Pirate of the Honey Island Swamp, the ignoble Pierre Rameau.

Captain Pitcher had established a hide-out between what is now Pass Christian and the western edge of Long Beach. This is now referred to as Pitcher's Point. During his many voyages, all of his crewmen learned to despise him. He had a tree house built high into the branches of a tall Oak. When ashore, the pirate would hike up a rope ladder to his tree-house to sleep. He made it a habit not to mingle with his men. However, one day he had taken extra liberties in confronting an Indian wench who belonged to one of his crew members. After falling asleep the crew placed dry brush all around the base of the tree and set it afire. Pitcher, realized that he could not escape. He bellowed out profanities upon all of the men and cursed all the land around him with prophetic death and tragedy.

Over the centuries, the Gulf Coast had and has suffered more than its share of killer storms and tornadoes. As reported by Kat Bergeron, of the Sun-Herald newspaper, "on the very same spot where Captain Pitcher's tree house was planted, a motel, a retreat home, a magnificent mansion called *Mount Vernon*, and even a housing subdivision have become casualties to the curse. Since then, many killer storms and unwarranted fires have raged havoc and destruction even upon the neighboring areas adjoining Pitcher's Point."

New Orleans makes a strong claim on Jean Lafitte who was the most famous of all the pirates who scavenged the coastal areas from Galveston, Texas to Mobile, Alabama. Because of his participation in the Battle of New Orleans by helping to thwart the British, he was given exoneration. In several documents, it has been reported that Jean Lafitte had been born of Jewish descent in 1789 in the town of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Many stories have been told of his infamous journeys. After his pardon in New Orleans, he was reported to have disappeared in the West Indies. However in 1825, a person by the name of Jean Lafito bought a tract of land in Bay St. Louis from Jean and Genevieve Nicaise. There, this Jean Lafito built his home and died in 1850.

Piracy was practiced for hundreds of years. Many of the agents ignored allegiance to any one country's flag. They flew their own and abided to their own laws. However, during times of war between countries, it was always considered fair game for citizens to plunder or to protect those who were actively engaged in the profitable ventures.

Pot O' Gold – It was reported that a 17-year old young man living on N. Beach, the site of the former Cantoni's Inn. While resting in a hammock watching his horse stomp and kick up the turf, he arose to discover the rim of a pot protruding from the ground containing a large amount of gold coins.

"Lafitte also reportedly owned an earlier house in Waveland which has become known as the *Pirate House* which dates back to 1802. Unfortunately it was washed away during the Camille maelstrom.", as related by Nola Nance Oliver in *The Gulf Coast Country of Mississippi.*

The Pirate House was located at 649 North Beach Boulevard in Waveland. It was reportedly built in 1802 by a New Orleans businessman who moonlighted as a pirate and financial agent for Jean Lafitte and his Barataria pirates. Some accounts say the house actually belonged to Lafitte.

A tunnel ran from the water's edge to the house's basement, which some believed doubled as a holding place for "black ivory" or illegally smuggled slaves. An early legend, reports that tree men were thrown alive into a deep well in the back yard. Ever since there were stories of the shirt sleeved ghost which returned to walk across the yard. The Pirate House was demolished by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

The owners salvaged thousands of bricks strewn about the area, including the doors and grillwork, and constructed a much smaller cottage 50 feet to the rear of the original house.

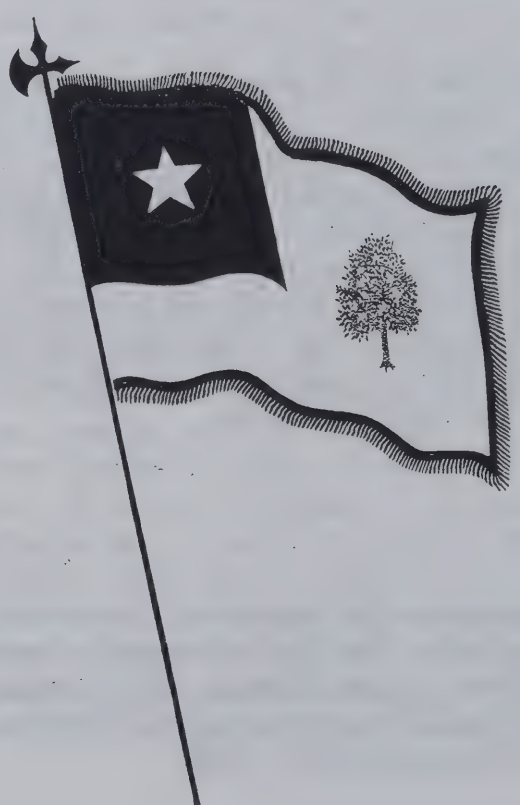
A story goes that "one of Jean Lafitte's pirates slipped away from the moorings at one of the Coast inlets and took off with some of the booty in order to bury the cache at DeLisle. In carrying the hefty chest, he also took along his huge vicious dog which was left at the treasure site to perform guard duty. The buccaneer, however, was killed while plundering for more treasures. The dog continued his vigilance until dying of old age. It is still told by many folks at DeLisle that the ghost of the dog lives on. It has been reported to be seen beneath an old Oak tree on dark nights as it prowls and growls all night long at the banks of the Wolf river.

The Flags

Coast Mississippians like to recount the history of their flags as numbering eight banners. The first was actually planted in 1682 by LaSalle with the French standard known for the House of Bourbon represented by the *Golden Fleur de Lis* in a field of white. D'Iberville planted the flag for a second time in 1699.

When the British arrested control of the territory in 1773 they took some of Florida and some of Louisiana and created the fifteenth colony which the English called West Florida and raised their flag known as the *British Red Ensign*. When the original 13 colonies rebelled in 1776, the two Florida colonies remained loyal to King George III of England.

In 1779 the Spanish appropriated the two Floridas hoisting their colors decorated with *Lions and Castles*. Spanish reign in the West Florida Territory was ended by a rebellion of Americans in Baton Rouge who raised the *Lone Star Flag* in 1810 celebrating the independence of the Republic of West Florida. When Mississippi became a State in 1817, they flew the *American Flag with fifteen stars and fifteen stripes*. In 1861, Mississippi adopted its official State flag combining the *Lone Star with the Magnolia tree*. Upon secession later in 1861, the *Confederate Stars and Bars* was flown. In 1865, the renewed American Flag was raised. The current State flag was adopted combining the Confederate Stars and Bars with the traditional Magnolia tree. (as described by Nola Nance Oliver in *The Gulf Coast of Mississippi*)



Mississippi State Flag as adopted by the State Convention of 1861, showing the white Lone Star on a blue field, and the Magnolia Tree.

Hancock County
Tri-Centennial

Early Growth

The Territory of Mississippi was organized on April 7, 1798 constituting that land mass of both Mississippi and Alabama north of the 31st parallel, but excluded the Spanish controlled coastal region which was called West Florida. Visualize, by extending the line that makes the boot portion of Southeast Louisiana, across Mississippi and Alabama. The southern counties were included in the West Florida Territory.

In 1801, at age 26, William Charles Cole Claiborne was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson as governor of the newly organized Mississippi Territory (which excluded the Gulf Coast). He faced three major problems that he realized were inter-related. Those were: Peace with the Indians, conflicting land ownership claims, and the need for protection from foreign invasion.

In 1803, President Jefferson sent James Monroe to France to purchase New Orleans and West Florida. Napoleon countered the request by generously including Louisiana into the sale package. Claiborne was then sent to New Orleans where he assumed the Territorial Governorship of all the Louisiana purchased territory. Robert Williams was appointed Governor of the Mississippi Territory in 1806, followed by David Holmes in 1809.

With the Louisiana Territory acquisition from France in 1803, the southern-most portion was designated the Territory of Orleans, conforming with much of present-day Louisiana.

Spanish West Florida spread from Baton Rouge and Natchez to Pensacola on the east, the Gulf of Mexico on the South and the 31st parallel on the North. (The northern boundary at that time was the 31st parallel which is approximately 40 miles north of the gulfshore.) In 1810, a group of enraged settlers, staged a revolution in the vicinity of St. Francisville and Baton Rouge upon learning that they were excluded from being part of the new Territory of Orleans. The leaders of that revolution declared West Florida to be an independent Republic. They then raised the Lone Star Flag and appealed for United States statehood. Even though President Madison had annexed West Florida into the Louisiana Purchase, Spain had disregarded this maneuver which then further infuriated the rebels.

This Mississippi Map of 1819 shows West Florida, south of the 31st parallel, with Baton Rouge and St. Francisville along the Mississippi River. Also, clearly drawn is the original set of boundaries of a very large Hancock County which extended from the Pearl River to Biloxi Bay. Lake Borgne was drawn in greater magnitude than it is today.

The Military Roads of General Wilkerson across Louisiana and the road built by Zachary Taylor in Hancock County are clearly displayed. Shown boldly, the 31st parallel later became the route for the Federal Road, which was established for Federal postal service delivery.

Shortly thereafter, the American Stars and Stripes replaced the Lone Star flag with instructions from Governor Claiborne to Dr. William Flood to enlist each settlement along the Coast. On January 9, 1811, Flood docked his sloop, *the Alligator*, at Simon Favre's east bank farm on the Pearl River. There, Flood raised the American flag, and appointed Favre justice of the peace for Biloxi Parish, which consisted of the area from Pearl River to Biloxi Bay. That same day, he repeated raising flags at Bay St. Louis and at Pass Christian where he appointed Philip Saucier of DeLisle, a justice of the peace for that combined area. Jacques Ladner of Biloxi Bay received his documents for appointment to Pascagoula Parish. At that time, the population estimates recorded by Flood were 750 persons along the Coast.

When Louisiana became a state in 1812, its boundaries were extended to the Pearl River, leaving the remaining West Florida lands from the Pearl to the Perdido River to be included in the Mississippi Territory. That coastal region was then known as the County of Mobile.

The Mississippi Territory ownership was further populated and settled following General Andrew Jackson's defeat of the Creek Nation in the Battle of Horse Shoe Bend on March 27, 1813 and later, on January 8, 1815, when he defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans.

Eventually, Mobile County was divided into the three counties of Hancock, Jackson, and Mobile; with Hancock being named for John Hancock, the signer of the Declaration of Independence. The population of all the Mississippi Territory in 1812 was just 31,000, which met only half the requirement for statehood admittance. This restriction was created between the U.S. Congress and Georgia in order that Georgia surrender its western land claims to Mississippi. In no other territory were land entanglements so restrained in preventing statehood as it had occurred in Mississippi. It was said that, "Land claims overlapped like shingles on a roof." This was primarily because Mississippi had evolved through four influencing governments: France, England, Spain and the state of Georgia, which had also issued land grants in that area. Land-titles and land claims continued to be a great problem of frustration to the inhabitants in regards to ownership and property rights. This resulted in many lawsuits over a period of many years.

Finally, on March 1, 1817, the U.S. Congress passed an enabling Act permitting the Mississippi Territory to organize a constitutional convention and write its own constitution. Mississippi was awarded statehood on December 10, 1817. It was admitted as the 20th state to the Union with the official signing by President James Monroe. With the convening of the first general assembly of the State Legislature in 1818, the area then known as Shieldsborough was incorporated, resulting in Shieldsborough becoming the first official Town along the Mississippi coast.

Upon entry into the Union, approximately half of the land area of Mississippi was owned by the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians, with most of their lands covered by virgin forests. These tracts of vast forests were turned over to the U.S. government in 1830, with the signing of a treaty by the Choctaws which ceded their lands in Mississippi.

This Map of 1822
displays the boundaries establishing the original Hancock and Jackson Counties. Clearly shown is the Military Road of Zachary Taylor completed in 1820.

When the county was first carved from the Mississippi Territory, it consisted of the lands between Pearl River on the west to Biloxi Bay on the east; and from the 31st parallel at the north, to the Gulf of Mexico on the south. Hancock County was officially recognized on December 14, 1812.

Gradually, Hancock was reduced in size in order to create three additional counties. First to be ceded was Harrison County on February 5, 1841, which included the coastal region between Bay of St. Louis and the Bay of Biloxi. On February 22, 1890, Stone County was created by the transfer of Hancock's northeastern limits, followed by Pearl River County on March 18, 1908, as formed from the northwest corner section.

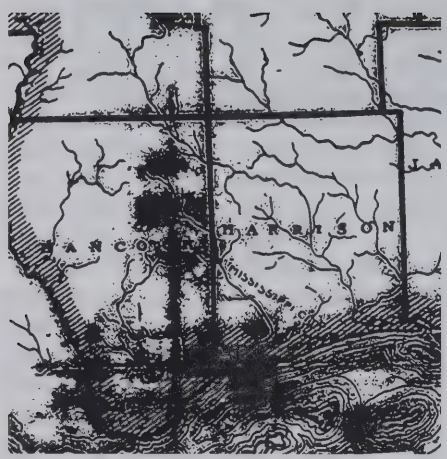
Early Government

In 1838, the villages of Shieldsborough (by corporate boundary expansion), Pass Christian, and Biloxi became incorporated; all three towns at that time were included in the county of Hancock.

Hancock County's first county seat was at Caesar, a community near to its geographic center. Once Hancock County was established in 1812, plans and site discussions resulted in the building of a courthouse five years later, in 1817. The courthouse was built at Center, which later became Caesar. The county government remained there for twenty years, until the courthouse and county seat were moved to Gainesville in 1837.

The town of Gainesville on the Pearl River had developed into a shipping point of some significance. It was formerly a busy and prosperous town, manufacturing lumber and shipping cotton from as far away as Columbia, Mississippi. However, fire destroyed the courthouse on March 31, 1853, and the county Seat was subsequently moved to Shieldsborough (Bay St. Louis), but not without a prolonged contest between the two cities which was temporarily interrupted by the Civil War years and the period of Reconstruction. In addition to fire losses in 1853, some of the county records were declared to have been destroyed by Federal troops in 1863.

A Circuit Court assembly meeting was called during April 1861, but the records show that no meeting was held for four more years. On Monday, May 1, 1865, another attempt was made to hold court at Buck Branch, a small place located in northern Pearl River County, but the judge failed to appear. No other session was held until December 4, 1865, when court was able to return to Gainesville where the question to transfer the county seat was raised.



This Map of 1839
displays the boundaries which established the new counties of Hancock and Harrison which were subdivided from the original Hancock County area. (Note: the creation of Harrison County took place officially on February 5, 1841)

However, those who favored Gainesville, ordered to receive proposals for building a jailhouse there.

This was countered by an act of the state legislature which called an election to determine the future county seat. In examining WPA documents of former Hancock County history, the scribes quoted the minutes of the Board of Police in a special March 1867 session: "Whereas at an election held at the various precincts of Hancock County of the 3rd Monday, 18th day of March 1867, . . . it appearing further to the satisfaction of the Board that Gainesville retained the highest number of votes for the said seat of Justice. It is therefore ordered by the Board that the said town of Gainesville be and is this date declared the seat of Justice of this County."

Needless to say, the county board did not have the last word. In April of 1867, the "Board of Police of Hancock County, on motion of preemptory mandate (must) proceed to provide for public buildings and to establish the seat of Justice at Shieldsborough. It is therefore ordered, adjudged and decreed, and the Court . . . does hereby command that the said defendant as such Board of Police to forthwith, proceed to establish the seat of justice of the county in conformity with the choice of the qualified voters of the same as evidenced at said election at the place designated thereby."

The May 1867 term of the Police Court was held at Shieldsborough in accordance with the decision above cited, and the following resolution was adopted: "It appearing to the satisfaction of the Board that the city of Shieldsborough in said county received the majority of the legal votes of said county for the permanent county seat of Justice. It is therefore ordered by the Board that the said city of Shieldsborough be and is hereby declared from and after this date the permanent seat of Justice of the County."

Arguments had been going on for years, so sure were the citizens of Shieldsborough in housing the seat of government that even as early as October 17, 1838, Rutelius and Marie Pray deeded to the county of Hancock, the lots of ground for the erection of a courthouse on which the present county courthouse now stands. This gift of land was made more than a generation before the county seat was made official.

The courthouse of Hancock was a large two story frame building measuring 50x70, which was erected in 1874, at a cost of $6,000. The court, jury and consultation rooms were upstairs with offices located on the ground floor.

Hancock County Seat and Courthouse Locations

1817 - Center (Caesar)
1837 - Gainesville
1838 - Shieldsborough received a Deed of Gift to build a Courthouse
1853 - Gainesville Courthouse fire
1865 - Gainesville was reinstated as the County Seat following Civil War
1867 - March, County referendum vote wrongly declared in favor of Gainesville
1867 - April, Dispute settlement made by Mississippi State Court, awarding the County seat to Shieldsborough.
1867 - May, County Seat officially established, thereafter, court convened in Shieldsborough
1874 - Shieldsborough constructed a Courthouse
1893 - The wooden frame Courthouse was renovated to appear as shown on cover
1911 - the New (existing) Courthouse was constructed as it is today

Legend has it that a courthouse at Shieldsboro had actually been built earlier than documented. It supposedly had concrete sidewalks, on which many of the country folk would not walk upon when they went to court, because they had never seen a sidewalk before.

The county records were securely maintained in fire-proof vaults with all-steel safes. In the same yard was the brick jail which was fitted with steel cells and an enclosed fence. "The courthouse is manned by a good and careful set of officers, none of whom are more painstaking and competent than James F. Cazeneuve, the sheriff and tax collector of the county", as reported in the *Sea Coast Echo, May 20, 1893.*

Prior to beginning construction of the new courthouse, a contract was let for $650 to Napoleon Caron to move the "old frame courthouse" and the vault it contained, to the east side of the grounds. He later bought the "old courthouse" building for $150 at auction, and the picket fence and posts were sold to J.E. Saucier for $5.

To complete the transition, the following purchases were made for the new court and jury rooms: three dozen chairs, four dozen cuspidors, two dozen bed-sheets, and a dozen single-beds with mattresses, pillows and blankets.

"The new additions and improvements and the general renovation of the Hancock county courthouse after a month extension of the specified time for its completion according to contract, is completed. From the time worn and dilapidated looking box-shaped building, an architectural ornament to the city and county has assumed

its appearance, and while it is not altogether a structure of new material, the eye of the admiring stranger will not recognize the deception. In converting the old into the new, the County Board of Supervisors did not enact the order on the basis merely because the financial situation of the county admitted it or for any reason of unfounded causes, but because, by their wise and far-seeingness, recognized that it was an absolute necessity and would meet the hearty approval of all. The structure truly stands as a tribute to the ableness of the Hancock county board of supervisors of the present term of office. The courthouse is not a brick nor of stone, but of wood, wood from the roof to the floor-sills and considering its cost and size, it is the most attractive looking courthouse in the State of Mississippi, and without fear of contradiction can this be asserted. Bay St. Louis can feel flattered of such handsome public building". *(Sea Coast Echo, 1/21/1893).*

In 1910, H.S. Weston, president of the Board of Supervisors, received plans from Kennan & Weiss, New Orleans architects, who were awarded approval to build the new courthouse "not to exceed the sum of $25,000." Winning the contract for construction with a bid of $24,989 was Jett Bros. Contracting Co. of Alabama. The contract was signed August 1, 1910, with a completion time of eight months. On December 6, 1910, the county supervisors borrowed $10,000 from Hancock Bank, issuing five warrants of $2,000 each, payable one each year for five years. The courthouse was formally accepted by the Board on September 20, 1911.

The Hancock County Courthouse
It stands today just as it was when it was erected in 1911 -- A Noble and Imposing structure with its six concrete colonades stalwartly reminding its citizenry of its proud and significant heritage.

Bay St. Louis Historian, Wagner, in describing the Courthouse, stated, "The modified Ionic columns are especially well done. A large sheet metal ornamental cupola original to the building was damaged beyond repair in Hurricane Camille (1969) and not replaced when the building was restored."

Hancock County is big and bountiful, stretching along U.S. Highway 90 and Interstate 10, from the Pearl River to Harrison County. It is a healthy combination of piney woods, running streams and subtropical seashore, spellbinding to so many of those who casually come just to visit or to stay a lifetime. During the first hundred years of its existence only a few hundred people were aware of the charm hidden north of the coastline. Mile after mile of tall timbers were seen only by the sawmill crews which had passed through and passed on. Hancock's almost endless realm of trees and streams were ideal for the hunter and fisherman. Its sprawling open cattle ranges were sparsely spotted by farming communities.

Today rural electric power lines and secondary roads have penetrated its piney woods, home seekers are scouting its rivers and bayous and coast cuddling subdivisions and shouldering their way back farther and farther through the trees beyond the highway. Huge suburban home developments new homesites spread onto the outskirts of Bay St. Louis, along the Kiln road, along the Jordan River and Bayou LaCroix, and all around Diamondhead.

Hancock County, prior to 1970, was two separate worlds; the populated and popular beach area around Bay St. Louis and Waveland and the practically unknown back country. But now it can proudly point out to its visitors the beauty and availability of its woods and waters, and the attractive opportunities for comfortable modern living back a few miles in the county and only a few minutes from the busy booming Coast strip of Bay St. Louis. Since time immemorial Hancock's chief sources of income have been tourists and timber. They still are. The tourist industry is growing steadily, and easily understood as more and more travelers become aware of Hancock's panorama of pine thickets that parallel Highway 90 after it leaves the Pearl River passing by Pearlington, Waveland, and Bay St. Louis; and, also, along Interstate 10 as that cement ribbon passes through access roads to Stennis Space Center, Picayune, the Kiln and Diamondhead.

BAY SAINT LOUIS
Tri-Centennial

Main Street Old World Charm

Bay St. Louis, originally known as Shieldsborough, now serves as the seat of government for Hancock County. Like Waveland, Clermont Harbor, and Lakeshore to its west, Bay St. Louis has remained popular to Orleanians as a weekend vacationland. However, Bay St. Louis had an earlier heritage than its neighboring communities, which produced a melting pot for Indian, French, Spanish, and other cultures. Bay St. Louis is well known for its large oak trees at the City Hall park, St Joseph's Convent yard, St. Stanislaus grounds, Citizen Street, DeMontluzin Street, and along North Beach Boulevard.

Its Main Street merchants confidently claim to have the South's largest group of architecturally intact nineteenth century structures. This is where residents, visitors and tourists come together to shop for art, crafts and antiques while being dined and entertained on weekdays, weekends, and evenings. Its citizens, supportive of gaming activities, have benefitted greatly by increased revenues from gaming businesses such as Casino Magic's Recreational Resort complex. In recent years, the city as well as the county have, therefore, undergone several significant changes to its infrastructure.

1699 to 1799

The First Centennial

Iberville sounded and charted the Bay waters in April of 1699, as a potential site for a fort, but found the depths too shallow. This was followed by an exploratory trip on May 29, 1699 by Bienville in seeking to establish a peace agreement with the Colapissa Indians that were settled along the Pearl River and north of Lake Pontchartrain.

In June of 1699, while again sounding the channel at the Pass Christian peninsula, the French named that channel *Passe aux Huîtres* for the many oysters they found there. The group went ashore and stayed one night to hunt the wild game in the area. Bienville named the Bay of St. Louis for the patron saint, Saint Louis.

Returning from another exploration of the Mississippi River, on January 21, 1700, Bienville led his explorers ashore at present day Waveland. The following day they traced the shore and stayed the night on the bluffs of the present town-site of Bay St. Louis.

Jean Baptiste Saucier, a French-Canadian sergeant, frequently led small groups of soldiers and Canadians to make camp in the area around the Bay during the early 1700s. Sometimes they stayed for several months when food supplies dwindled at the settlement forts of Biloxi and Mobile. There they would live with the Indians and hunt for wild game as they would await the return of ships with renewed supplies from France.

In 1717, Madame deMezieres was given a French land grant to all the area around the Bay, but she did not perform the necessary colonization to retain her bid. However, she did make an attempt to settle, because two ships, the *La Gironde* and the *La Volage* arrived at Ship Island in 1721, with 300 people destined for several claims along the Coast including that of the deMezieres concession. Regardless of these reports, there were many conditions that had to be met before colonists were allowed to settle on concession claims. Those who attempted to settle the Gulf seaboard were not trained for the untamed wilderness, many having died from disease, they lacked food and potable water, and many returned to France, disheartened by their first encounter with difficulty.

Bay St. Louis Namesake
Louis IX of France was canonized Saint Louis. Born in 1270, he was a model ruler and father of eleven children; He was a Franciscan tertiary who cared especially for lepers; He built Sainte Chapelle in Paris as a reliquary for the crown of thorns; while on his second crusade, he died of the plaque near Tunis; He is considered the patron of masons and sculptors. Saint Louis patron's day is celebrated on August 25th.

A young, scholarly, ship's carpenter, by the name of Andre Penicaut, kept a Journal of his first 22 years while at the Gulf Coast colony. Regarding an exploratory trip with Bienville during August 1699, he wrote the following report. "Resting a few weeks, we then explored the westerly shores in order to seek the Mississippi River once more. On the way, we came across a half-circular Bay which we named Bay of St. Louis. Going ashore, we were delighted to find many wild animals to hunt including scrub cattle and deer. We remained three days to kill only as many as our party needed for the next several weeks."

Andre Penicaut also reported 1699, "We continued along the (Mississippi) river making a circuit around back to Lake Pontchartrain by way of Pass Manchac (which means back entrance). From there, northward around the Lake we came upon the Tangipahoa River (which means white corn). After circling Lake Pontchartrain, we passed through the Rigolets (which means Channel) to return to the Bay of St. Louis. Once more we took to the hunt, taking back to the Fort with us, many cows and deer and other wild game, which filled our long boats."

Jean Baptiste Nicaise and his brother, Joseph were brother-in-laws to Philipe Saucier and Bartheleme Grelot, who established settlements at Wolf River and Bayou DeLisle. Saucier, Grelot and the Nicaise brothers, with their spouses, left "Belle Fontaine" in the Mobile area during the late 1770s. Philipe Saucier, grandson of Jean Baptiste Saucier, took legal title to 680 acres of Bay St. Louis property on August 27, 1781. This land also, like the area of Mobile which they had left behind, was called "*Fontaine*". The Saucier's and Grelot's moved to the DeLisle area across the Bay, and transferred the land grant to Jean Baptiste "Martial" Nicaise and Joseph Nicaise.

By virtue of being among the earliest homesteaders to the area, the Nicaise's acquired the choice lands on the eastern bluffs. They continued to inhabit and cultivate the Bay area until 1813, during which time, some of the land was sold and some portions were given to their heirs. Early on, "Martial" Nicaise had taken Louise Ladner, daughter of Jean Baptiste Christian Ladner for his bride. It was in 1813 that these elder Bay St. Louis pioneers relocated to the Kiln area. Their heritage and properties were left behind for the nine "Martial" children and their descendants, as well as the four daughters of Joseph.

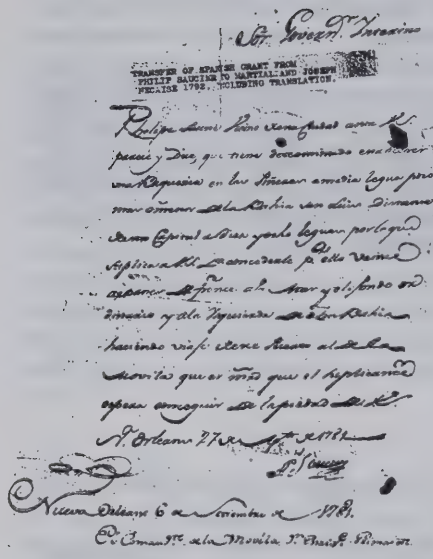
There were, also, other early contenders for land in the same area. Madame Charlot (Carlo) established her land grant adjoining the Nicaises. On April 1, 1783, Louis Boisdoré presented an application to Governor Miro of Louisiana asking for the lands known for its Indian name, the *Achoucoupoulous*. This unusually huge tract was approved and it embraced a 15 mile wide strip running northward a distance of 40 miles taking in all of the southwestern area of Mississippi except the inhabited areas nearer to present day Bay St. Louis and Waveland. Still later, in 1789, a Spanish land grant was given to Constantine Tardil, but neither Boisdoré, nor Tardil, complied with the Spanish requirements in colonizing the land. Tardil's site was then taken over by General Thomas Shields in 1790, who, soon afterwards, settled in the area. Shields was the inspector of Lighthouses for the Pearl River District. The French-Canadians who lived about the Bay area intermarried with the Indians, Spaniards, and the Acadians who were expelled from Nova Scotia; thus forming the blood strains sometimes called Creole.

The majority of settlers who came to the Gulf South region before 1795 claimed their lands under Spanish grants. A traveler passing through the area in 1804 reported that there were 10 to 15 French families in the present Bay St. Louis area. Until the end of the War of 1812, economic growth in the old Mississippi Southwest lagged behind that of other regions to the north and east.

On another occasion, Penicaut wrote, "By February 1704, Bienville realized that we had only four months of food supplies remaining, . . . (he sent) 50 volunteers to take to the nearby woods to find shelter and food with the allied Indians. At the Bay of St. Louis, we stopped for a one day hunt and spent the night to plan our further pursuit." (Half went on the Mississippi River while half remained in the Bay area for several months.)

The d'Anville Map of 1732 designated the area west of the Bay of St. Louis as "Fontaine", and the area west of the Mobile River as "Belle Fontaine". This was many years before Philipe Saucier and "Martial" Nicaise settled the lands around the Bay.

Fontaine, which means fountain, evidently was named for the many mineral springs which would spontaneously spout up from underground pressures.


TRANSFER OF SPANISH GRANT FROM PHILIP SAUCIER TO MARTIAL AND JOSEPH NICAISE 1788. FOLLOWING TRANSLATION.

Nueva Orleans 6 de Noviembre de 1788.

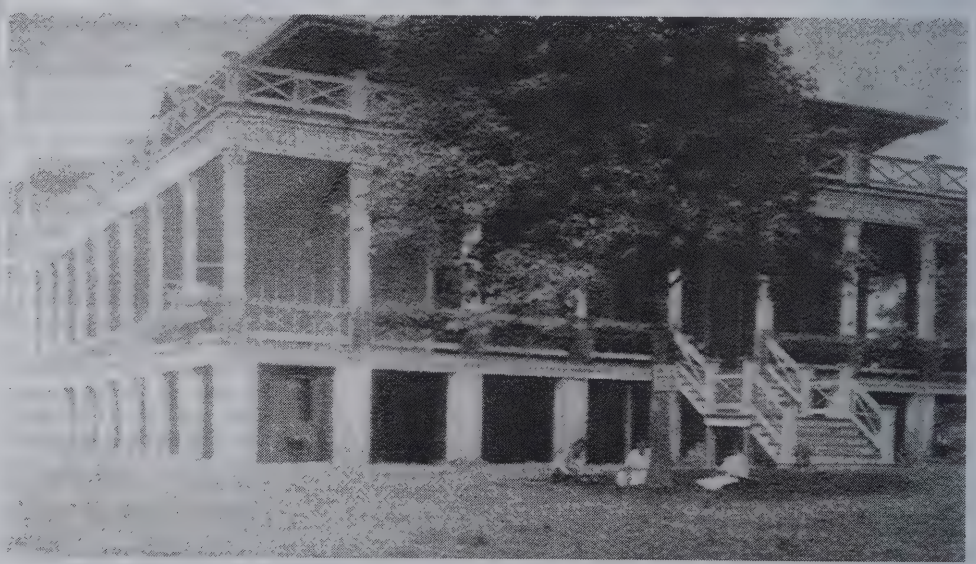
Above is a copy of the official land transfer of the Spanish land grant given to Philip Saucier, which he released to Martial and Joseph Nicaise.

The Nicaise heritage established a significant family dynasty entrenched in the history of Bay St. Louis.

Timber for the second Jackson House came from a little mill on Bayou Galere. Pegs and square nails were used to fasten the timbers. General Jackson never occupied the house, but his nephew occupied it for a time. (extracted from History of Hancock County, WPA Writers.)

As a finale to the War of 1812, the significant Battle of New Orleans in 1815 was won under the leadership of General Andrew Jackson who gathered Kentuckians, Mississippians, Louisianians, Free Negroes, and Pirates to defeat the British. Thereafter, commenced the Antebellum period, which endured from 1815 to 1861. The Coast's flanking cities, New Orleans and Mobile, increased their populations to the extent that sailing schooners, and later, steamboats would regularly work the Mississippi Sound. This trade gave rise to "*Watering holes*" in between the principal settlements along the coast. Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian, by laying close to New Orleans, developed more rapidly prior to the age of the faster steamboats. Other coastal communities were Mississippi City, Biloxi, Ocean Springs and the (East and West) Pascagoulas.

The Jackson House was built at the time of the Battle of New Orleans (1815) for General Jackson by a contractor, J. J. Johnston, who came from Virginia. It was located at the Northeast corner of the park site in the trees that face the Mississippi Sound. The timber was taken from the area with axe and saw. Wooden pegs were used to hold the structure together. The flooring was 4 x 6 boards and the bricks (made on the place) for the foundation were held together with tar made from fat pine. Just as the house was completed, it burned to the ground. At the time of the fire General Jackson was in New Orleans. He came to Shieldsboro (Bay St.Louis), paid Mr. Johnston for his work and ordered him to rebuild the house.



The Town of Shieldsborough was submitted for incorporation on January 21, 1818 during the First Assembly of the State Legislature. This was followed by the establishment of a post office on October 11, 1819, and the appointment of John B. Toulmé, an early settler, as its first Postmaster.

Other Acts of Incorporation took place on February 8, 1838 and again another on January 4, 1858 as Shieldsboro continued to expand its boundaries and change its form of government. It was not, however, until March 2, 1875 that the town's name was officially changed to Bay St. Louis. As a matter of interest, Bay St. Louis celebrated its first hundred-year Anniversary Centennial during the first week of January 1958, only to find that the town had undergone previous incorporations back to 1818. Needless to say, the celebrants in 1958 were not aware of the town's earlier incorporations. This resulted in an increased interest in local folklore and history.

Access to coastal towns was solely by water until 1820, when seven hundred men of the Eighth Regiment, U.S. Infantry, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Zachary Taylor completed the road from Pearl River to the western shore of the Bay of St. Louis. The medical officer attached to the troop cantonment at the road's end described a bayside strip of homes and summer cottages as "the little village of Shieldsborough". In the middle was the residential coastline running three or four miles in length. By 1825 Shieldsborough rivaled Pearlington for the seat of Hancock County court. The newly constructed military road through the piney woods, from St. Tammany, Louisiana into Shieldsboro, was attracting newcomers from the back country to the small village. The area had been a long-established summer retreat for the Creole population of New Orleans and the planters of the Natchez District. The permanent population consisted primarily of descendants of the original French settlers from the early 1700s and a few Spanish who arrived later.

By 1842, the "*Watering-Hole*" of Shieldsboro boasted a first-class hotel in addition to a number of boarding houses. The hotel owners and a number of public-spirited citizens raised funds to extend the town's wharf an additional 80 feet farther into the Bay in order that boats could land all year long without becoming grounded in the shallow banks.

Following is an advertisement which was placed for two months during 1845, promoting the Bay St. Louis Hotel, which was located at South Beach Boulevard and Union Avenue.

"The public are respectfully informed that the subscriber has become the Lessee of the above establishment, and

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To establish and incorporate the Town of Shield'sborough.

SEC. 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi in General Assembly convened,* That the place situated on the West side of the Bay St. Louis, in the county of Hancock, known by the name of Shieldsborough, is hereby declared to be a town, under the name of Shieldsborough; and it shall be the duty of the owners thereof, to deposite in the clerk's office of the county court of the county aforesaid, within six months after the passage of this act, a plat of said town.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the town of Shieldsborough be, and the same is hereby incorporated, and the citizens of said town are hereby authorized, on the first Monday in April, annually, at the court house in said town, to vote for five persons, inhabitants of said town, as trustees; a majority of whom shall constitute a quorum to do business: also a town treasurer, assessor and collector, to serve for the term of one year; which said election shall be superintended by a justice of the peace.

The above document copy is from the First General Assembly of the Mississippi legislature, enacting Shieldsborough as a Town in 1818.

will open it for the reception of company on Saturday, the 24th of May, 1845. It is unnecessary to allude to the salubrity of the situation, the beautiful shades, and the retirement always enjoyed at this celebrated establishment, for they are too well known. The subscriber will add that in addition to the usual attractions of the place, he will have carriages, saddle horses, pleasure yachts, and whatever may contribute to constitute amusement and make the place agreeable to visitors. The Table will be kept in a liberal style, and the Wines and Liquors are choice and superior in their quality. A limited number of Families will be received at reasonable rates. The following prices will be charged to those who make engagements for the season: Board per month $35; Daily Boarders $2; Weekly $10; Children and servants half-price. Parties wishing to make arrangements for board can do so by applying at the Arcade Restaurant. *(Daily Picayune, July 16, 1845)*

The Custom House

The Custom House was moved from Pearlington to Shieldsborough by the Mississippi legislature in January 1844. It was then located on the second floor of Levy's Store.

The Spanish House
has also been called the *Custom's House*, however, there has been no concrete evidence found to substantiate this. Its architectural design is that of 1780 to 1800, located at 708 South Beach.

Letters to the Editor:

The following Letter to the Editor was evidently written by a love-smitten bachelor. "I have got to the Bay St. Louis Hotel, kept by Mr. Lewis; awful quantity of ladies, children and servants; very few gentlemen, and nearly all Creole; but I like that style; and then there's plenty of trees, walking parties, boating parties, singing of the tall opera music, going to bed full of it, and poetry, and if you bring yourself to it, love, in which I am, and which you, or any of you that desires will be if you come here amongst one hundred ladies, with only thirty men, myself the best looking of course. *(Daily Delta June 27, 1847)*

The New Orleans Daily Delta reported on May 15, 1850, that, "Bay of St. Louis possesses the great advantage of being nearest the city (only 60 miles to New Orleans) so that merchants and men of business may go over and see their families without being long absent from their duties. The mail from New Orleans arriving two or three hours before that of Mobile, enables merchants and others to reply to the letters sent them from the city by the return mail. The Bay of St. Louis is one of the most ancient French settlements on the sea-coast. Long before ships passed up through the Mississippi, and New Orleans had become a town, this place was the harbor of the small French vessels which conducted the commerce of the French colonies along the Mississippi, passing up through Lake Maurepas, the Amite, the Iberville, and thence up as far as Vincennes, Indiana."

The New Orleans Daily Delta remarked on Wednesday, August 13, 1851, that "A most delightful entertainment was offered last Saturday to the denizens and visitors of the Bay in the shape of a grand ball, given at the Hotel. Mr. Lewis, the proprietor, is an excellent business man in his line, and his guests are treated to abundance, comfort and amusement, with the liberality of one who understands the management of a house. A most glittering and beautiful firmament smiled upon the sports of the evening, and carriages fast set up in rows before the Hotel, conveying the belles of the place from the nice little village of Gainesville and farthest extremity of the Bay. Never should we have dreamed such bevies of the fair could be collected for such an occasion in a place of such limited extent as the one from which we write, and surely we were surprised to see the spacious ballroom completely decorated and filled with a galaxy which rivaled in beauty of person and dress, any reunion which it has been our lot to cast our eyes upon, not excepting our city parties. It would be unjust in your correspondent to select from the many, a few of those whom he admired, and add to a description of

The *Watering Holes* of the Gulf Coast maintained the tradition for their naming. There were many hotels and cottages which provided music and Balls and many occasions for the fermented beverages. The *"Texas House"* was also common along the Coast. These were strictly bachelor quarters where "men only" could stay to drink and be rowdy all night long.

their features and costumes a list of their initials. In the gaiety and joviality of the ball, all mingled with equal delight to the small hours of Sunday, and the company broke up about two, after a sumptuous and delicious supper. Governor Walker and General Downs were the dignitaries we distinguished in the crowd of beaux. Not dwelling at the Hotel ourself, we rely upon the reports of its guests for the high opinion we have formed of its management."

John B. Toulmé

Jean Baptiste Toulmé extended the Saucier Family Heritage into Bay St. Louis by marrying Victoire, a daughter of Philipe Saucier. Thereby, Martial and Joseph Nicaise became his uncles by marriage. J.B. Toulmé had 6 daughters and one son, John Victor Toulmé

John B. Toulmé is considered the first established merchant in Bay St. Louis, having arrived from France in the early 1800s. He married Victoire Saucier, daughter of Philipe Saucier, in 1812 and built a two-room house on the corner of Union and the beach and became a leading merchant and active citizen. During the years, he expanded and created a number of businesses such as a leather factory and a saw-mill. He was successful in acquiring properties in New Orleans and Mobile as well as in Bay St. Louis. He served as a public official and was the first philanthropist in the area. He gave the land now occupied by the Masonic Temple, the Methodist Church, and Cedar Rest Cemetery to the city. The house he built was located at 218 North Beach where he fathered six daughters and one son. At his death, he wished to be placed at the Cedar Rest Cemetery. J.B. Toulmé served as Shieldsborough's first Postmaster from April 1837 to November 1846 and as the Town Secretary in 1858.

John B. Toulmé's Last Will and Testament serves as a significant historical document of early land use and heritage interest.

- To his widow, Victoire Saucier, he specifically mentions her slaves; Sylvester, Auguste, Angele, Harriet, Merante and children. He also mentions cattle bought from Jesse Cowand and rents of properties on Chartres Street in New Orleans. (1) To his first daughter, Marie Adele, married to Francis G. Casanova, he bequeathed the lot and houses in Shieldsboro lying north of Union Street, adjoining the property of Francis G. Casanova. In addition to property next to that of the heirs of George Carco and property formerly claimed by S. Broadwell. The slaves included: Hampton, Anna and her five children in addition to his share of the "Fayard" stock of cattle. (2) To his second daughter, Marie Louise Azelie, married to Dudley R. Walker. (3) To his third daughter, Victoire, who was married to Henry Saucier, he bequeathed 1/2 the steam sawmill on Bayou Galere, the remaining

part of the Guedon Toulmé land claim, and half the lands purchased for the sawmill. Also, slaves: Charles, Bob, Schumach, Howard, Paul, Louis, Rolion, and Claude. Also, two lots in Shieldsboro on the south side of Union Street which were occupied by Mrs. Stockton's Hotel. (4) To his only son, John Victor, he bequeathed his unsold lands on the north side of Main Street, except the "Lodge Lot", but including the Markethouse at the foot of Main St. Also, part of the pasture at Point Clear, and the Negro, Francois, plus a stock of cattle. (5) To his fourth daughter, Marie Virginia, married to August Girard, he bequeathed two lots on the south side of Main Street, and the lot lying on the bank nearest the Louisiana Wharf with improvements known as the Mississippi Exchange, also, the Negro boy Alfred, the negro man Ben, the negro woman Lucy and half the Gordon stock of cattle. (6) To his fifth daughter, Magdeleine, married to Evariste V. Saucier, he bequeathed a lot of land in Shieldsboro known as the Ledoux property with furniture and house thereon, and the vacant lot of land on the north side adjoining the lots herein bequeathed to M.V. Girard. Also, the lot on the north side of Main Street and the "Lodge Lot." Also, the mulatto man Edmund, the Negro woman Gertrude, Negro woman Justine, and the Morgan stock of cattle. (7) Lastly to his sixth daughter, Delphine Claudia, married to Eugene Garody, he bequeathed a lot on the south side of Washington Street known as the Mazilly property. Also, the Negro woman Polite, and Charles, and Lostin. Also half the Jourdan stock of cattle.

Toulmé's other declared ownerships included: a steam sawmill on the Wolf River, a large quantity of saw logs, a schooner named the "*Montebello*", a lot in New Orleans near the Old Basin canal and another house on Chartres Street. He also listed extensive properties in the city of Mobile which were also divided among the heirs.

Battle of the Bay of St. Louis

For weeks the British fleet had been gathering in the Gulf of Mexico preparing for an attack on the City of New Orleans. Commodore Daniel T. Patterson, commander of the scanty American Naval force based at the New Orleans Station, knew that he would be unable to mount a successful naval operation in the open sea against the huge forces of the British. Therefore his strategy was to prepare defenses for the city at forts in the Rigolets and along the Mississippi River. He dispatched Lt. Thomas Ap Catesby Jones with a small fleet of five gunboats and two schooners, the "*Sea Horse*" and the "*Alligator*",

NAVAL BATTLE OF
BAY ST. LOUIS
On Dec. 14, 1814, five U.S. gunboats fired on a British fleet entering Lake Borgne. Their action was the last naval defense of the U.S. before the victory of General Andrew Jackson at New Orleans.

The Historic Marker was placed by the Hancock County Historical Society to commemorate the Naval Battle of the Bay of St. Louis, December 1814.

to defend the entrance to the Rigolets. Commodore Patterson's orders to Lt. Jones were to "**sink the enemy or be sunk**" and, all else failing, to delay the British arrival in the city as long as possible to allow General Andrew Jackson as much time as possible for preparations for battle at Chalmette. Lt. Jones attempted to block the entrance to Lake Borgne where he stationed his gunboats across the channel in a line between Malheureux Island and Point Clear where the southwest shore of the Bay of St. Louis turns west toward the Rigolets. The British Captain Lockyer moved 42 barges carrying over 1000 British troops, through the pass between Ship and Cat Islands and then westward to anchor off Pass Christian. When Lt. Jones realized that some of the British boats were aground in the shallow waters, he sent the schooner, "*Sea Horse*", under the command of Sailing Master William Johnson, into the Bay of St. Louis to remove ammunition and stores from a warehouse located on this bluff at Shieldsboro. Three British barges immediately moved to capture the "*Sea Horse*".

The "*Sea Horse*" gallantly fought the superior numbers and once more the British were forced to retreat, several of their men having been wounded and at least one of their boats was seriously damaged. But it was necessary at 7:30 to blow up the schooner and to burn the public store house to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. On the morning of the 14th, the British fleet advanced from anchorage toward the entrance to Lake Borgne where Lt. Jones' determined little fleet of five boats, 23 guns and 182 men, blocked their route toward New Orleans. The British returned once more where a fierce battle endured for over two hours. Jones' defense, although vastly outnumbered, lost only six Americans killed and 35 wounded opposed to 17 British dead, seventy-seven wounded. The battles in the waters off Bay St. Louis lasted a total of little more than three hours but succeeded in delaying the enemy several days. This valuable time permitted General Jackson's troops to complete their fortifications and for the arrival of additional troops and as such may have been crucial to the victory at Chalmette.

J.F.H. Claiborne unfolded the story that at the time of the British engagement with the "*Sea Horse*", a visiting aunt from Natchez had gone to the beach along with the crowd of townspeople to watch the spectacle of the approaching British. The few soldiers guarding the storehouse feared an imminent landing of the enemy and were preparing to retreat when Miss Claiborne took a cigar from John V. Toulmé and ignited the fuse of one of the two cannons mounted on the bluff.

This resulted in the "*Sea Horse*" taking action against the British barges and drove them back to the protection of their fleet.

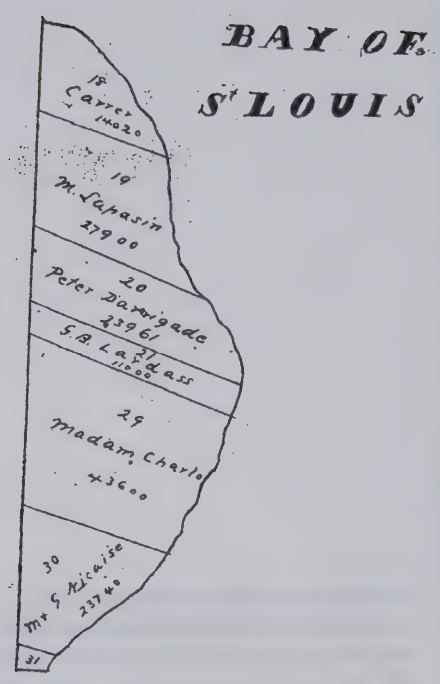
THE ANTEBELLUM PERIOD
1815 to 1861

EARLY ARRIVALS

Following the initial ground breaking of the Bay area by Jean Baptiste "Martial" Nicaise and his brother Joseph and by Thomas Shields in the late 1700s, there were others soon to arrive. These persons either opted to seek official land grants or simply homesteaded, which later led to the American government deciding who the legal owners would be. For the most part, the early claims consisted of large tracts of land fronting the Bay by 20 arpents and extending northwesterly to a depth of 40 arpents. The French arpent measurement equalled approximately 192 feet. A significant portion of the northeastern section, described as "*Choucoupoulou Point*" was granted by the Baron de Carondelet, Governor of Louisiana in 1794, to Louis Alexis Lassassier. That property measuring 15 arpents fronting the Bay and 40 arpents deep in a northwesterly direction was later inherited by Melite Lassassier. This pattern became entrenched with the first official confirmation claims being established under Spanish control of the area. These grants were usually upheld by the American Congress once Mississippi became a state in 1817.

Historian, Charles Sullivan, described the Gulf Coast in 1811, as consisting of "about 770 people and most of them were of French descent. By 1818, however, the influx of settlers from the North and East brought in a new pattern of living that fostered the establishment of small inland settlements, usually built around a single family-owned

Following the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans of 1815 was won by the leadership of General Andrew Jackson in his gathering of Kentuckians, Mississsippians, Louisianians, Free Negroes, and Pirates. They defeated the British, resulting in the commencement of the Antebellum period, 1815 to 1861. The Coast's flanking cities of New Orleans and Mobile increased their populations to the extent that sailing schooners and later, steamboats plied the Coast. This trade gave rise to the "Watering holes" in between. Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian laying close to New Orleans developed more rapidly prior to the age of the faster Steamboats. Other coastal communities were Mississippi City, Biloxi, Ocean Springs and the (East and West) Pascagoulas.



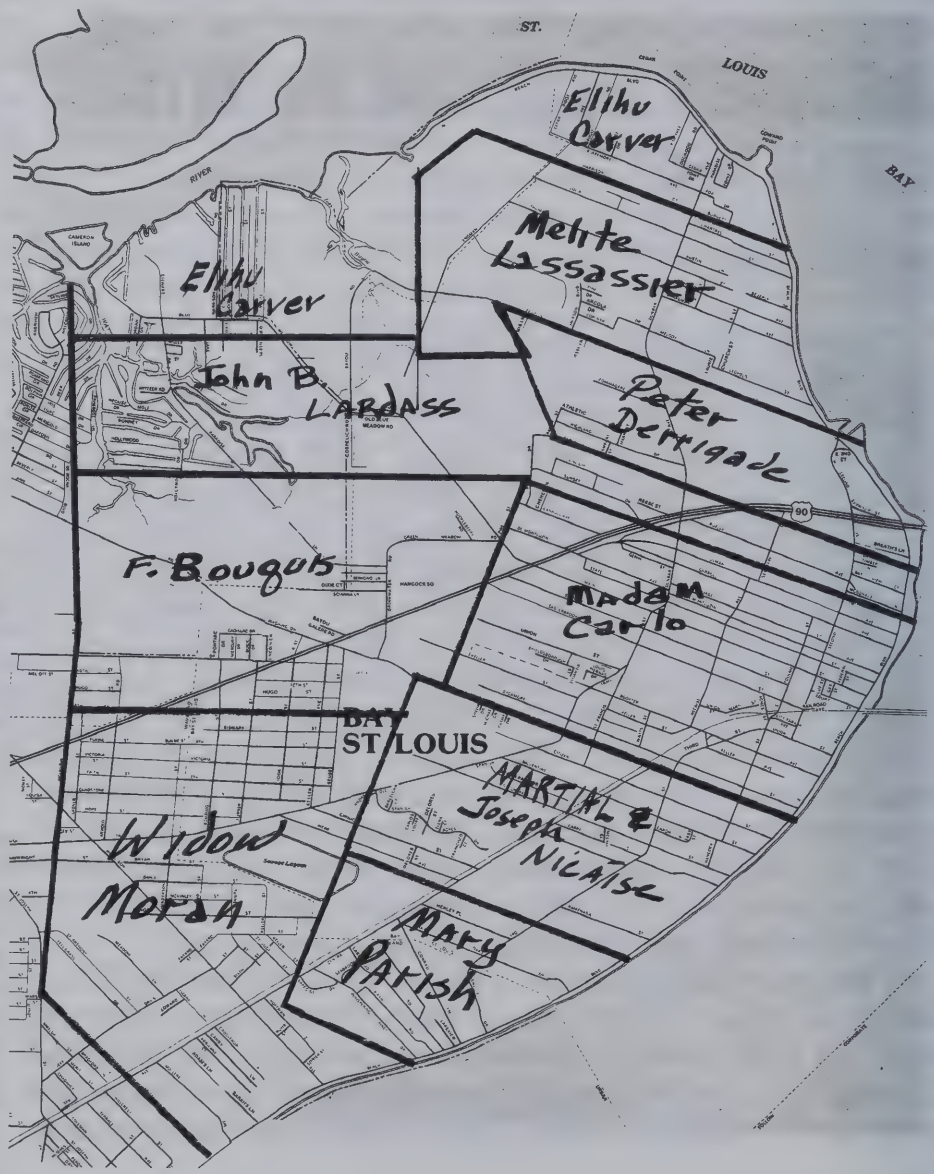
The above Survey Map was created in 1849 showing the earliest titled land holders in Shieldsborough (Bay St. Louis).

The map at right designates the approximate shapes and boundaries of the first officially titled landholders. The recreation was drawn by Dan Ellis as a compilation from several maps including the map above, the map on the next page and from a map designating the township and sectional lines laid out by Surveyor Henry Washington in 1822 and the designated private claims as listed by Surveyor Elihu Carver in 1824.

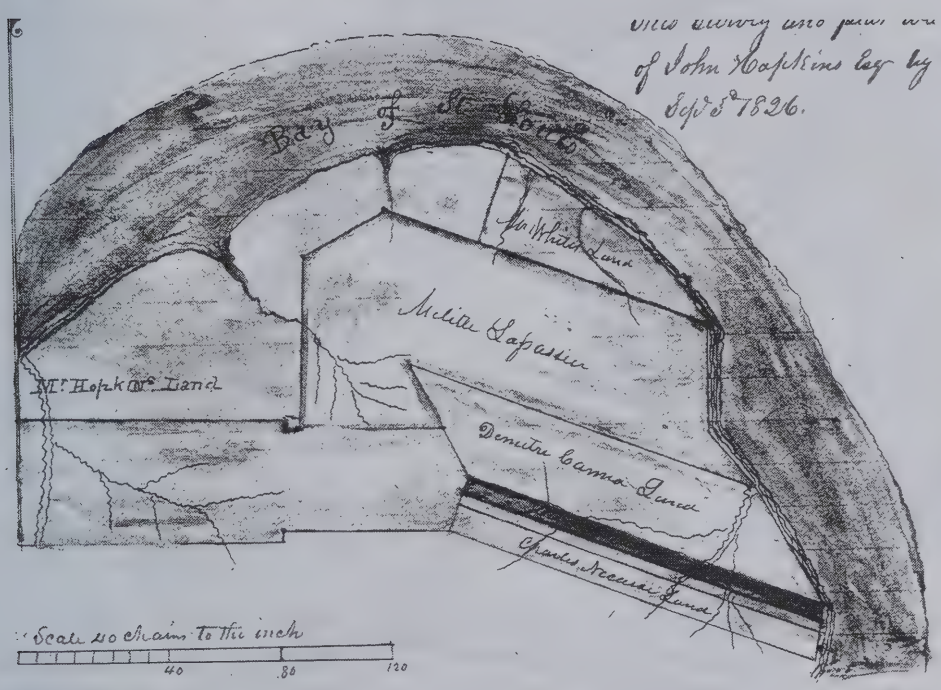
industry: a sawmill, lumber port, or turpentine still. Timber was sent downriver on small boats and carried to Ship Island, there to be loaded on ships bound for foreign shore by inland lumbermen."

"By 1830 New Orleans had discovered the Gulf Coast. Small family-owned hotels and boarding houses sprang up and elaborate homes were built. Steamboats plied the coast from Mobile, Alabama, to New Orleans, making scheduled stops at the small towns, and the tourist business was born", reported Sullivan.

The Bay peninsula was established by such primary settlers as: Nicaise, Madam Carlo, John Lardass, Peter Darrigade, Melite Lassassier, and Elihu Carver as indicated in maps of 1826 and 1843.



Soon following, were other landholders to that area, including Dimitry Canna, Charles Nicaise, and Samuel White. In 1826, John Hopkins acquired two large tracts, 433 acres from Jean Baptiste and Charles Nicaise, and 640 acres from Pierre Morin, located between Bayou LaCroix and Bayou Philipe (Joe's Bayou) back bay along the mouth of the Jourdan River.



This Survey and land plat of 1826 is found in Land Records Book "A", page 514 as it designates the redistribution of property by land sales to John Hopkins, Samuel White, Demitry Canna, and Charles Nicaise. (Courtesy the Hancock Court House)

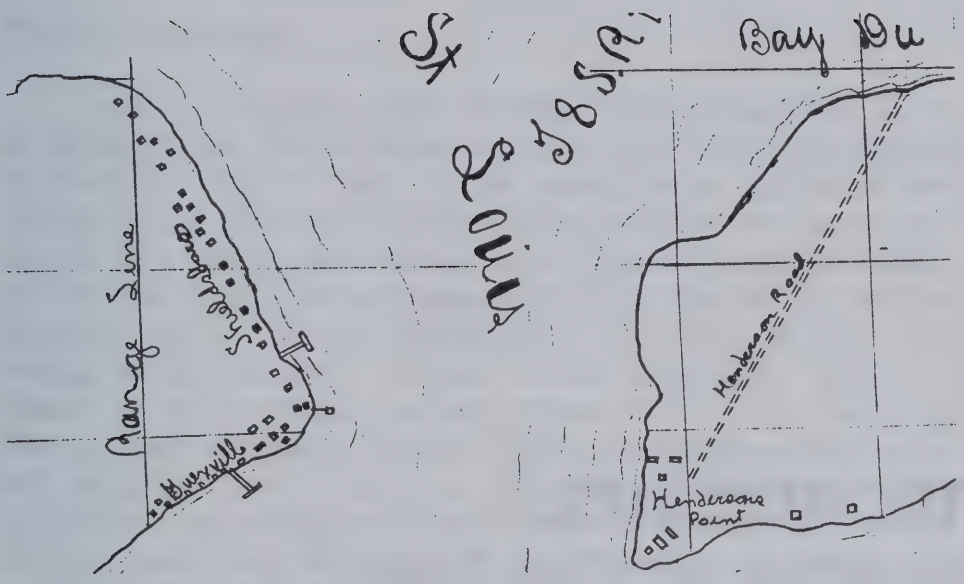
As time progressed, inland portions of the peninsula were being acquired by such persons as John B. Toulme, John L. Henderson, D.R. Walker, Guedon Toulme, F. Bouguie, and E. Herbault. Francois Fremeaux established a large southern frontage along the Bay as well as David F. Guex. The Guex tract fronted the southern portion of the Bay in addition to cutting a vast inland section. His lands were significant enough for one map of 1854 to depict the territorial spread as "Guexville", neighboring the area of "Shieldsboro".

By the 1840s, Father Buteux was actively acquiring lands for the Catholic church and the two schools he fostered. In 1860, John Toulme sold a large lot to the Vestrymen of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The lot also included lands dedicated for a cemetery.

This was a healthy period of time when more and more mansions and cottages were being built by planters from Natchez and St. Tammany and business and professionals were escaping the torrid temperatures at New Orleans. It was indeed a land of sugar and honey.

This Geodetic Map of 1857, entitled *St. Louis Bay and Shieldsboro Harbor*, is part of a series of surveys of United States coastal regions as prepared under the jurisdiction the U.S. Navy prior to the Civil War. Notice the sparsity of streets with major roadways cutting through the peninsula. The dark square shapes designate homes, cottages, and hotels on the mainland and the many piers and wharves spoking out to the sea with standard bathhouses featured. (The map is courtesy of Emile "Larry" Larroux.)

This was the heyday of the "Watering Holes" as seaport communities vied with each other to erect magnificent hotels to lure ship passengers to their shores. The fresh seabreezes and the mineral waters from artesian springs were an ever beckoning inducement.



This Plat Map of 1854 shows the Bay of St. Louis with the Bay peninsula on the west and the Pass peninsula on the east. Notice the interesting deployment of housings denoted as Shieldsboro and another section which would be located south of the L&N Railroad bridge as Guexville. During the 1850s, David Guex was a large landholder. Inquiring of the name similarity to Gex, attorney Gerald Gex assures us that there was no relationship between L.M. Gex and David Guex. Incidentally, the French pronunciation for Gex is *Jay*, whereas Guex is pronounced as *Goo*.

A Civil War Episode

Rev. Henry LeDuc, born in France, was appointed pastor of Bay St. Louis on November 17, 1859, at the age of 25. He remained for 38 years, during which, on October 5, 1863, a company of Federal soldiers arrived from Fort Pike at Chef Menteur and landed at the Bay to be met by a Company of Sibley's Cavalry. The Confederates repulsed the Yankees and took some prisoners, wounding four and taking three others prisoners. A few weeks later, on October 20th, two hundred Federals from the gunboat "*Commodore*", arrived ashore to rescue their comrades. Captain Marshall of the Confederate Cavalry was at the Bay. During an encounter, he was shot by a Federal soldier. Father LeDuc and his housekeeper, Miss Suzanne, rushed out preventing the Federal soldier from finishing Captain Marshall with his bayonet. The Yankees resolved to burn the town, beginning with the Lockett Hall properties in the neighborhood of the Pollock residence.

The town seemed doomed and the people were terrified. At that moment, Father LeDuc appeared in the street holding up the *Cross of Christ.* Instantly, every Federal soldier ceased firing in respect to the cross and doffed their hats in reverence. Thus, due to Father LeDuc's courage, peace was restored and Shieldsboro (Bay St. Louis) was saved from destruction.

THE BUILDERS
Founding of "Old Town"

Master Builders

The "master builder and designer" for Bay St. Louis was Charles Sanger who built St. Stanislaus College, St. Joseph's Academy for girls, St. Clair Catholic Church in Waveland, and the Christ Church at Cedar Point. Mr. Sanger also built the Bay St. Louis Water Works and installed its network of pipes. He is also noted for building most of the large mansions as well as many of the less noted cottages along the Gulf and Bay shores.

Another of the major master builders of many of the downtown stores and beachfront cottages was a Negro by the name of Eugene Ray. He constructed the Crescent Hotel, Yenni's Store, L.M. Gex's grocery, and many of the Queen Anne cottages downtown and along the shore. Mr. Ray was also the City undertaker.

Bay St. Louis is picturesque, both on land and by water. The shoreline structures sit high on hilly bluffs bordering the beaches. "Old Town", both the businesses and the residential areas sit on an elevated plateau comprising 10 to 20 feet above sea level. In 1915, the town limits were enclosed within 30 square miles of the peninsula. It is no wonder that d'Iberville and Bienville visited the area so frequently in 1699 and 1700 with a yearning to establish a fort there. But the waters were too shallow and abundant with exposed oyster reefs.

LD SHIELDSBORO
Now Bay St. Louis, named for Thomas Shields who obtained Spanish grant nearby 1790. After 1800, settlement was popular summer resort for planters & trade from interior made it busy port of entry & export.

Business Development
Late 1800'S - Early 1900s

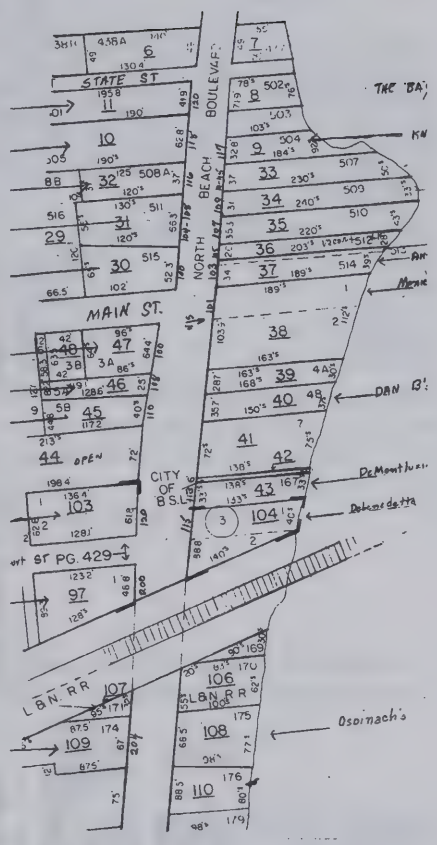
The Old Landmarks

Bay St. Louis Ice, Light & Bottling Works was the owner of one of the chief public utilities, which consisted of furnishing street lighting for the City of Bay St. Louis. In this connection, in 1912, there were 120 street lights distributed throughout the residential and commercial district. The lighting plant was equipped to furnish power for motors, electric fans, electric flat irons and small plants. The ice plant was also equipped with a York Ice Machine of 25 tons daily capacity. The bottling works machinery included Crown Equipment. Mr. A. L. Stokoe its sole proprietor, not only provided for the local trade, but also exported carbonated drinks throughout the interior of the County, and along the L & N Railroad. Mr. Stokoe had originated from Jeanerette, La., arriving at the Bay in 1906, to become involved with the Merchants Bank, an extensive property holder and a meaningful promoter of Bay St. Louis. *(Hancock County Sketch Book, 1912)*

In 1890, *W. H. Yenni* arrived to establish a fashionable millinery, stocking goods for ladies' shoes, hosiery and all styles of boys' and misses' hats. "No store in the city has a prettier or better location, and this is indeed the leading millinery store of the town. The stock is always up to date, all new goods, bought direct from leading wholesale houses, and all shapes and styles of bonnets are trimmed to exactly suit the wearer. The furnishing goods afford large sales, and besides having all that ladies find most desirable, there is also a large stock of men's fine shoes." *(SCE 05/20/1893)*

After a few years he built a building at Front and Washington streets across from Keller's store where he too lost his building in the "Fire of 1894." He rebuilt and continued successfully his line of dry goods, millinery, notions, and furnishings.

The mammoth "*Blue Store*" (so named because it was painted a bright blue), was a victim of the "Fire of 1894". Immediately following his lose, August Keller rented a building across the street, from Frank Taconi. There, he opened the "*Red Store*" on the following Thursday morning, at the same time, negotiating to rebuild a new brick building on the site of the former "Blue Store". "There are few towns that can boast of such deserving and energetic business men like that of his kind. *(SCE 2/24/1894)* Keller's advertising usually ran such as:



Old Town Bay St. Louis above is courtesy of the Hancock Historical Society.

The August Keller Store at Beach and Washington was purchased by the Yacht Club. The building was later home for the Star Theater and today, the Big E.

"The Blue Store sells the world-renown Gold and Silver Shirts. We have them white and in colors, fronts of all kinds and styles. This is the kind of shirt that you get in any first-class haberdashery, consequently if you want a good shirt you know where to get it. And, -- The Blue store will close out a lot of 6 dozen Misses Canvass shoes, laced and buttoned at 50 cents a pair." These shoes sold originally for $1.00. Keller rebuilt his store of brick on Front Street at Washington, in 1895.

Mr. *Gaston A. Levy* owned the two-story building on the corner of Main and Front Streets from which he operated a Dry goods store complete with notions, furnishings, clothes, hats and shoes. On the second level was located the Custom House, which was moved from Gainesville in 1844.

L.M. Gex arrived to the Bay in about 1892 and opened his general merchandise store at Hancock and Goodchildren Streets. He stocked wines and liquors and exported seafood. He also had the largest bakery in town. As his business grew, Gex became a Timber Contractor selling timber and piling to the Panama Canal Commission and to the U.S. Government in filling timber contracts for the Missouri River and its tributaries.

The Gardebled Drug Store was established in 1880 at Toulme and Main Streets.

E.C. Gardebled arrived in 1861 and established a Drug store in 1880 at the corner of Main and Toulme streets. He offered an extensive line of drugs and sundries including some of the first postcards of the area.

Joseph F. Cazeneuve, Sheriff, operated a dry goods and clothing store formerly owned by Mr. George Planchet. The building at Front Street near Union, was called the "Oak Cottage", which he leased from Mrs. Planchet. The origination of the Planchet store was the second oldest established business in Bay St. Louis. It was later operated by Joseph Mauffray and following that, Octave Delph in 1942. The store was one which was rebuilt following the Fire of 1907.

The *Star Drug Store* located at the corner of Front Street and Union, was owned by Mr. Thomas L. Evans since 1880. He also established a soda fountain and confectionery trade. The building was owned by Mr. Planchet. Evans also produced his own products such as Evans' Sarsaparilla, Evans' Liver Regulator and Evans' Emulsion of Cod Liver Oil.

L. Spotorno's general merchandise store was located on the beachside of Front Street facing Main Street. He performed as the local historian, since his father had formerly owned a business with Mr. Garibaldi, one of the first established Bay businesses, which was located opposite Martin's old Steamboat landing.

John L. Henderson and A.R. Hart were partners in a legal and realty firm offering abstract and estate services. There office was located on the beachside of Front Street facing Main Street. He was the grandson of the Senator John L. Henderson who promoted Pass Christian and Henderson Point. The younger Henderson was particularly proud of his swimming record of having swam the 16 mile distance, without rest or change of stroke, from Blake's Wharf at Waveland to Cat Island.

E.S. Drake was a Civil Engineer and County Surveyor who arrived about the year 1900. He created a complete file of abstracts for Hancock County.

A. G. Pieri arrived at Bay St. Louis in 1863 to open his Drug Store on Front Street. He was the first licensed pharmacist, and was well respected for his professional courtesies. "When a prescription is laid on his prescription case, you may be rest assured that it will be filled accurately for he always keeps a stock of drugs that will admit of it, and as his drugs are fresh and full strength.

The L.A. DeMontluzin Sons Drug Store is known as the first business establishment at Bay St. Louis. It was located on the beachfront near the intersection of Court Street.

The elegant residence of Surveyor E.S. Drake can be found on Ulman Avenue.

As you enter the store you will see to the right the soda water department, and having drunk *the soda* here we think we may speak from experience, and it all goes on the plan *the proof of the pudding is the eating.* The location of the store is one of the best in the city, the interior is finished in native wood, and such a building and drugstore is a credit to any town. He keeps all kinds of patient medicines, mixed paints, lead and oil. Few drug stores have such a well selected stock and the courteous and urbane proprietor is enjoying the fruits of a handsome patronage." *(SCE 05/20/1893)* Mr. Pieri was elected mayor in 1894.

The W.A. McDonald home has maintained its elegance throughout the years. It is located on North Beach Boulevard.

The *Bay Grain Co.* was sold by J. A. Green to *W. A. McDonald* shortly after McDonald's arrival to Bay St. Louis in 1904. McDonald extended the grocery operations all along the Gulf coast from Gulfport to New Orleans and major markets of the Southern states. He established his warehouses along the main line of the L & N Railroad for his shipping facilities and was the sole distributor for many name brand tobacco, grocery, and farm products.

James Gilmore Fayard was the proprietor of the "*Rail Road Exchange*" *saloon.* He sold fine Wines, Liquors, Cigars and Tobacco in addition to Ice cold beer. "The Rules are: No loud talking, no profanity, no indecent expressions will be allowed, any one drunk and violating decency will not be permitted to remain in the house. The rules are quite rigidly enforced and the penalty for neglect is summarily inflicted." *(Sea Coast Echo Advertisement of 10/28/1893)*

"*Blind Tigers*" were of great concern to parents, wives, churchmen, and city officials in 1896. These were illegal saloons which operated to avoid paying taxes and license fees. They also served bootleg liquor in many instances, and needless to say, these lawbreakers were condemned but popular. Parents and young boys were warned about the evils that dwell in the dark hours. Young people were threatened with arrest if found out on the streets after 9 p. m. The solution to every generation concerning young people at night was tried in the form of "Curfew laws" and promoting Baseball as the place to work off energy. A baseball Park was built at Bay St. Louis in March of 1897 with Spotorno's Mill getting the contract for the lumber. (This was before Basketball became popular.)

The *Little French Market*, was operated by O.A. Fayard and S.C. Carver. Their main produce was meats and seafood. They were significant wholesale and retail distributors of oysters.

Conrad Sick had arrived at Bay St. Louis about 1887, where he became the principal dealer in building materials. His saw mill and planeing mill was located on the edge of town, almost opposite the Peerless Oyster Factory. The mills produced rough and dressed yellow pine lumber, catering principally to local trade. In connection with his lumber business, he owned and operated a gasoline tow boat, the "Bessie B", and he became a principal land owner of some of the choicest beach front property.

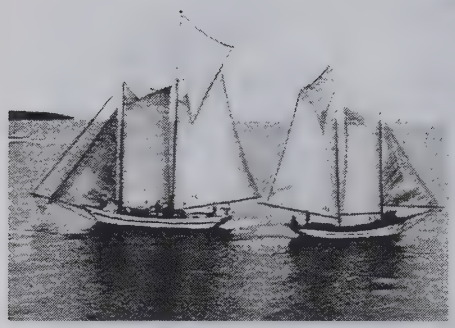
The *Peerless Oyster Co.* was located on five acres of land and over water with five factory buildings operating in an assembly line fashion. Unloading of seafood was handled in one building and moved through each building for further processing until loading for export to markets all over the U.S. George Firshing was the General manager in 1915. The Factory was demolished by the Hurricane of 1947, located where the Bay-Waveland Yacht Club and Marina is.

L. Bangard & Sons Livery Stable provided elegant carriages to let, and in connection with the stable ran a wagon line, delivering merchandise, moving pianos or anything requiring drayage. The stable has several good rigs, and among other equipment is a large tally-ho just suited for picnics and picnic parties. He was assisted by his sons, John, Murray and Forest, who were experienced hostlers. Claude Fayard, a partner, helped promote the business.

The Sawmill of Conrad Sick was located across from the Bay Waveland Yacht Club.

The Peerless Canning Factory consisted of five main buildings on the bayfront and jutted into the water to receive the many vessels unloading oysters and seafood for canning and export. Demolished by the Hurricane of 1947, it was replaced by the Bay Waveland Yacht Club.

Another factory was the Dunbar Cannery located at Cedar Point at the north end of Dunbar Avenue. It was owned by George and Frank Dunbar who also had canning factories at Biloxi and Pass Christian. Laborers, mostly women, were brought in from New Orleans to stay in Factory Cottages. They hand shucked the steamed oysters for canning.



Achille Fayard was the proprietor of another carriage line which met all the trains to accommodate the visitors to the city. He supplied carriages and tallyhos with teams and drivers when needed. He also specialized in hunting and excursion parties, and made it a point to secure only safe, but active horses.

Henry L. Piernas, a native of Bay St. Louis, was proprietor of the oyster bed known as the "Gulf Coast Oyster Bed" since 1875. He sent his boats to Cat Island three days a week. "Mr. Piernas' sail and oyster boat is one of the best on the Gulf, and when he is not busy in oyster fishing he uses it to convey merchandise to all points on the Gulf, but more especially for the benefit of the people of Bay St. Louis. He also has an oyster house in the city next door to the postoffice, where oysters are sold by the count, and they may always be had fresh in the shell or in bulk." Piernas, besides serving as the Postmaster from 1898 to 1911, owned considerable city property. *(SCE 5/20/1893)*

The Power Drug Company, established in 1907, was located on the beachfront across from the Hancock Bank. It was also known as the "Rexall Store" and for its franchise on Eastman Kodak cameras.

The *Joseph Combel Hardware Store* was founded in 1874. "He carries a most complete stock of all kinds of shelf and heavy hardware, and the well-known Monitor and famous Charter Oak stoves. His store is 40 x 50, and the goods artistically arranged, showing business tact and enterprise. The goods kept are all selected with care and with a view of having nothing but first-class articles to sell, and the prices charged are evidences of good goods well bought by a thorough business man. He also keeps queensware, saddlery, paints, oils, artesian well supplies, tin roofing and tinware, and in connection with the hardware store is a complete tinshop. Mr. Combel is one of the well-to-do men of the city, owns the business house he occupies as well as several others, a good dwelling and a fine Gulf front." (SCE 05/20/1893) The Combel Hardware Store was located on the beach only a stones throw from St. Stanislaus was severely damaged by the Hurricane of October 1893 as reported in the N.O. Daily Picayune of October 6, 1893.

Imperial Naval Stores Co. and Hancock Naval Stores Company, Ltd. were big producers in the turpentine and rosin industry of Hancock County. The companies were domiciled at Dillville, Miss., and has branches in the Hancock Turpentine Co., of Logtown, Miss., and the Bayou LaCroix Turpentine Co. of Dillville, Miss. "All of the products of these two concerns go for export and are shipped through the ports of New Orleans, Gulfport and Mobile. The Imperial Naval Stores Co., and the Hancock Naval Stores Co., own in fee simple,

22,000 acres of lands in Hancock County, not including the large tracts of leased lands." R. R. Perkins was the dominant factor in the Naval Stores Industry of Hancock County and was President of both parent companies, one of the largest industrial enterprises in the State of Mississippi, capitalized at half a million dollars, and was headquartered at Bay St. Louis. The company manufactured spirits, turpentine and rosin. The Imperial Naval Stores Company had branches in various sections of the County, including: The Center Turpentine Co., of Caesar, Miss; the J. L. Long Co., Vidalia, Miss.; Perkins Turpentine Co., Sellars, Miss.

Hotels

The Watering Holes

The *Bay Saint Louis Hotel* was originally established in 1842 with Mr. Lewis as the gracious proprietor. It was later owned and managed by Mrs. Anna (Annie) Allen. "The hotel is arranged on the principle of a main house with a number of detached cottages surrounding it on all sides . . . comprising several acres is situated on the beach drive." The grounds fronted the beach spreading 126 feet and extended back 485 feet, and located in the business center of town in close proximity to the post office. "There was an extensive and well kept lawn in front, well shaded by large and ornamented trees, from which, while reclining at ease in the swings or hammocks, one may get a fine view of the Gulf." The cottage containing the dining room and parlor was away from all the sleeping rooms as well as the kitchen. This hotel has not only the reputation of setting a good table, all nice and clean, with plenty of variety and the best of everything. Mrs. Allen purchased this place in May 1890 after having conducted a hotel in New Orleans for twenty three years previously. Since buying, she has built cottages, summer houses, sheds, out-houses, etc., besides laying Shillinger cement walks and being able to accommodate one hundred people comfortably during the summer. *(Along The Gulf 1895) (Sea Coast Echo 1893)*

Letter to the Editor: "Fine fun have we at the Bay, fine bathing, fishing, riding, dancing, picnics, and what not; splendid weather, oysters, sailing matches, etc., that would make your poor devil of the "Can-get-away-Club" weep. The author went on to describe the proprietor, Mr. Lewis's gracious handling of the Mason's celebration day. R. B. *(Daily Delta, Fri. June 17, 1851)*. A Mr. Lewis was then the proprietor.

In 1851, from Grand Bend (Waveland) in the southwest, the beach road followed the steadily rising ground, which peaked into bluffs at Main Street and diminished back to sea level at Cedar Point in the northeast. Beginning at Grand Bend with two cotton plantations, 60 residences divided into two groups by Main Street, faced the bay on the five-mile front to Cedar Point. At the intersection of Main street and the Beach road stood a cluster of businesses composed of two bakeries, a drugstore, a saddler, a cigar store, a blacksmith shop, a general store, a barroom, a combination barroom and grocery, and a soda shop owned by a well-to-do free black woman who sold excellent sarsaparilla in gallon jugs. The calaboose and a schoolhouse stood on the south side of Main Street. (Charles Sullivan, *The Mississippi Gulf Coast*)

"The Light Fantastic. Never did a lovelier night usher in a more successful and enjoyable affair than the ball given on Saturday night by the Bay St. Louis Hotel and its guests. Mrs. Allen, the warm-hearted and hospitable hostess spared no pains in perfecting all arrangements for the grand event. Dancing was soon resumed until about midnight when only sweet recollections of the ball at the Bay St. Louis Hotel was left to be enjoyed. For this occasion the grounds were superbly decorated with Chinese lanterns. *(SCE 8/20/1892)*

The *Clifton House*, located at the beach near Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church. In 1895, it was owned by John F. Markey and managed by his sister, Miss M.C. Markey. The main building, of old Creole style, had 14 rooms with other out-buildings and cottages. The dining room was separated from the other buildings being enclosed with lattice work to maximize on the Gulf breezes.

Above: The Tulane Hotel, located on the Beach near DeMonluzin Avenue, was one of the famous summer and winter health resorts with modernized plumbing offering hot and cold baths in every room.

The *Tulane Hotel* was established about 1898 and was celebrated as a health resort which was located on the Beach. It was a two-story massive frame structure with columns, porticos and large dormers. Its substantial attactive grounds were surrounded by a wrought iron fence emphasizing its gardens. The hotel was operated by Mrs. D.H. Boyle, handling a capacity for 60 guests.

The *Klock Hotel* was a 3-story building erected around 1912. The site and structure was owned by R.D. Klock who instituted his former school marm sister as its operator. Mrs. Remy Klock had the knack to provide good services in establishing a faithful patronage. The Klock Dancing Pavillion extended out along a wharf which allowed for evening and late afternoon dancing and fishing from the extended pier.

Below: The Klock Hotel, fronting on the Bay, was a noted hostelry and one of the first three story structures on the beachfront. It was steam-heated with accommodations for 100 guests.

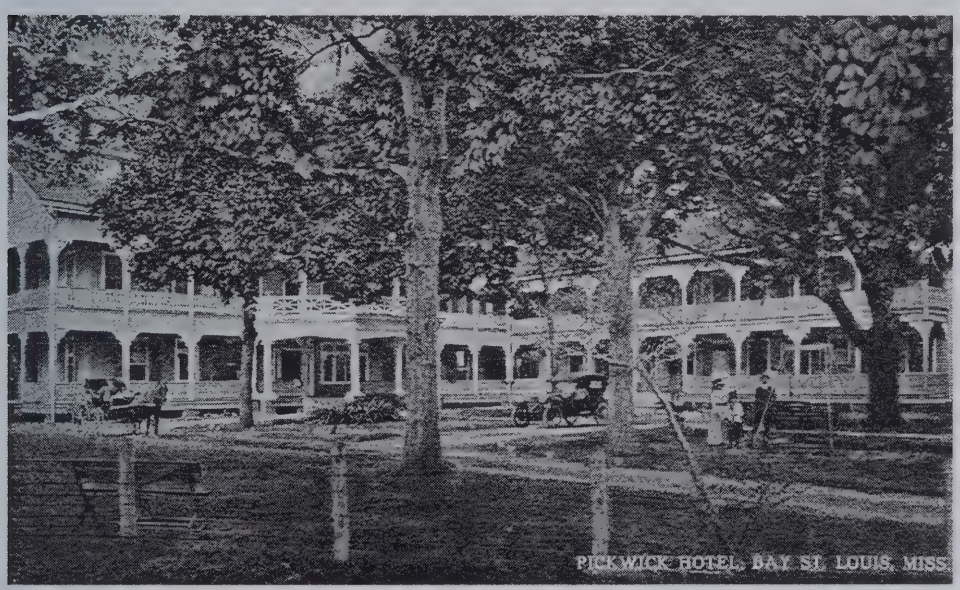
The *Bachelors Hall*, kept by J. H. Krebs, was located on the Beach in front of the Louisiana Wharf, providing prefered accomodations to men only. (N. O. Times, August 22, 1866)

The "*Villa Quisisana*", located at (630) Front Street. The hospitable and homelike *Villa Quisisana*, was established in the 1890s by Dr. L.H. von Gohren as a Health Resort for invalids and infirmed. The spacious grounds accomodated several houses for living quarters which were located on Front Street within a short distance of the Depot. Special diets were planned and hydro and electro thereuputic machines were provided for his clientele.

The *Crescent Hotel* was originally located at the junction of the Railroad, Front street and Court Street. The hotel dates before 1870 as indicated by the following: "The Crescent Rifles of Company K, left New Orleans on Saturday evening on board the New Orleans, Mobile & Texas Railroad train for Bay St. Louis where a target match and general merrymaking was to take place. The Excursionists arrived in time and were received by Captain Armstrong of the *Crescent Hotel*, who escorted them to his house, where the evening was pleasantly spent, the band of music, which accompanied the command by improvising a concert, upon which followed a much enjoyed Ball." *(June 25, 1871, M.J. Stevens File)*

The hotel was then operated by Captain J.V. Toulme, who served several terms as mayor of the Bay. His son, John V. Toulme was also a former mayor. The building was one of the largest and could accommodate 100 guests. Later it was renovated and renamed the *Hotel Pickwick* and passed to the proprietorship of John Shansy. The hotel was later purchased by H. S. Weston, president of the Weston Lumber Company at Logtown and for many years president of the Hancock County Board of Supervisors.

The *Pickwick Hotel* was razed by the Fire of 1907, afterwhich, in 1924, Mr. Weston and his brothers built a new hotel at the corner site of Front Street and Ulman, and named the *Hotel Weston*. After Weston's death, about 1937, the hotel was sold to Robert C. Reed and named the *Hotel Reed*. The favored location, in 1959, was converted to the Hotel Reed Nursing Center.



The Pickwick Hotel was located at 200 Front Street. In 1907, a month prior to the big downtown fire, the hotel was in process of moving its front wing forward by 50 feet in order to build a new addition.

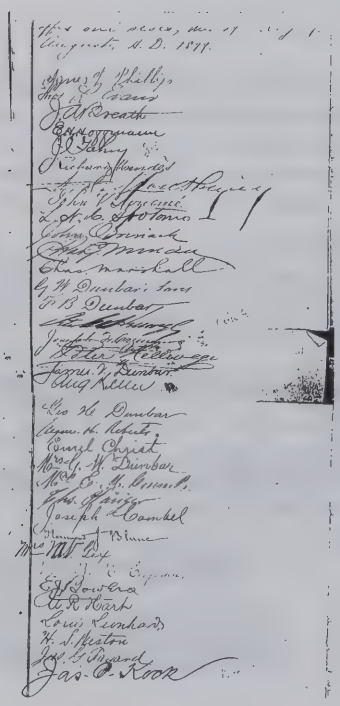
Banking

Perhaps the first banking activity was reported by a 79-year old former Bay resident of the "Nineties", who claimed that August Keller of the *Blue Store* at Washington Street, had a huge iron safe in the back of his store where customers and citizens kept their money for safekeeping with an understanding of it being payable on demand. Also, then Sheriff, Joseph F. Cazeneuve, permitted the country folk to put their money in the huge county safe, with each person's money or valuables being properly marked.

A newspaper clipping reported that John Osoinach, while working for Keller's *Blue Store*, acquired the unofficial title of being the Bay's first bank teller, because he cashed and issued checks for his customers. *(Sun Herald 7-29-1958)*

The *Peoples' Building and Loan Association* was established in 1890. Richard Mendez was President and J.A. Breath was Secretary. This appears to be the first endeavor to formalize a financial institute at the Bay.

Founder's Signatures of 1899
Below listed are the authentic signatures of the 19 originators to subscribe as Hancock Bank's shareholders.



The *Hancock Bank* was started on the evening of August 29, 1899, when nineteen business-minded citizens assembled at the Hancock County Courthouse for the purpose of organizing a bank for Bay St. Louis. The original subscribers were: J.A. Breath, Joseph F. Cazeneuve, L.A. deMontluzin, F.B. Dunbar, James V. Dunbar, Thomas L. Evans, John B. Fahey, Peter Hellwege, Peter E. Hellwege, E.H. Hoffman, August Keller, Charles Marshall, Richard Mendez, Charles G. Moreau, John Osoinach, Mrs. Agnes T. Phillips, Eugene H. Roberts, L.N.C. Spotorno, and John V. Toulme. Today, the bank still counts among its shareholders and depositors a number of direct descendants of the original nineteen individuals who attended the first organizational meeting. Its first office was a small frame building located on South Beach immediately north of and joining the property of St. Joseph's Academy, which rented for $7.00 a month.

Shortly thereafter, the bank's board of directors had purchased the site at the corner of Main Street and South Beach, where the present bank is still located. A contract was let March 1, 1900, to John T. McDonald for the construction of the new bank. It was the first two-story brick building ever built in Bay St. Louis. When occupied in September 1900, it housed the bank, the post office, and the U.S. Customs office. The Hancock Bank branch office on Highway 90, was opened Monday, June 28, 1976.

The Merchants Bank of Bay St. Louis was organized in 1903. The large two-story pressed brick building was built on Front Street. President of the Bank in 1915 was R.R. Perkins of Imperial Naval Stores Co. Other officers included, Joseph O. Mauffray, Dr. R. deMontluzin, J.A. Breath, John K. Edwards, L.M. Gex, E.N. Haas, C.L. Hopkins, John Osoinach, Charles G. Moreau, A.L. Stokoe, George R. Rea, and John B. Spotorno. Many of these founding officers were also founders of the Hancock Bank.

E.N. Haas is here shown in his 1900's office in New Orleans. His grandson, Mike Haas, Sr., uses the same desk. E.N., with his brother, S.J., originated from "the Kiln". They operated a sawmill at Lake Shore and E.N. Haas and T.H. Herlihy conducted a mercantile store and warehouse in Waveland.

The Mail

In 1804, President Thomas Jefferson established the coast postal service to New Orleans. A postal rider, Isaac Briggs, reported that the 200-mile route by horse-back from Fort Stoddard, Alabama, travelling south to Mobile across the coast to New Orleans, required 25 days. He described crossing the Pascagoula river 20 miles north of its mouth in a canoe with his horse swimming behind him. From there, he would then travel southwest to Simon Favre's farm on the Pearl river where he took passage to New Orleans by schooner.

This tedious journey resulted in the establishment of the Federal Road following along the 31st parallel from Fort Stoddard to the Pearl River, then by way of a southbound fork at Ford's Fort to reach the northshore of Lake Pontchartrain.

Postmasters Shieldsboro
Apr 1837 John B. Toulme
Nov 1846 Willis H. Arnold
Dec 1850 Nancy B. Arnold
Feb 1856 Benjamin Stones
Nov 1857 John V. Toulme
Nov 1865 Elizabeth A. Pierce
Sep 1867 Evariste V. Saucier
Dec 1869 Rebecca E. Wilkinson

Postmasters Bay St. Louis
May 1871 Eldridge McArthur
Mar 1874 Edith F. Ross
Oct 1875 Annie E. Avery
Aug 1885 Ella E. Joor
May 1894 Joseph E. Saucier
May 1898 Louis J. Piernas
Mar 1911 Richard Mendes
Feb 1915 Joseph E. Saucier
Dec 1923 Archibald R. Hart
Jan 1927 Henry C. Glover
Mar 1937 Leo G. Ford
Oct 1951 Frederick L. Herlihy
May 1957 Andy J. Becker
July 1972 Richard Shadoin
July 1975 Frank Taconi
May 1979 Thomas W. Hill
Jan 1990 Jimmy Moore

In 1888, an early morning L&N Mail Train, slowly approached Bay St. Louis. While crossing the bridge, a section of wheel came loose and fell into the Bay, resulting in a two hour layover for repairs. Captain Toulme, former Mayor of Bay St. Louis and owner of the Cresent Hotel, was requested to feed and take care of the train's passengers until they could be carried on through to New Orleans. To this, the Captain agreed, but Mrs.Toulme was in a fit, realizing she had to prepare for a whole trainload of people. In desperation, she sent hurry calls to good friends and neighbors who responded gallantly and promptly with food preparations from their own kitchens and graciously offered to serve the trays. One of the impromtu waitresses was a Congressman's wife, who became terrified from the loud invectives screamed out in a French rage, which she fully understood. In the confusion, it was soon discovered that the irate person was none other than Actress Sarah Bernhardt. Her fury was spent upon everyone because her schedule had been shattered by an inconsiderate, ungallant piece of iron! (Sun Herald 7/29/1958)

A mural, created by Louis Reynaud was formerly designed for the Main Street Post Office in 1938. It was restored and placed at the new Post Office building on Highway 90 in February 1989.

From 1818 until 1830, mail delivery averaged 28 days from New York to New Orleans. The route went through the western country down the Mississippi River to New Orleans by way of Natchez or Baton Rouge. Then the mail was distributed by schooner or horseback to other parts along the Gulf Coast.

A more expeditious route was called for in 1830, and coast deliveries were changed via Mobile; resulting in reducing the time to two weeks the first year and afterwards even more quickly. By 1846, the mail delivery became almost certain to be daily, however, the mail was most often sent collect.

Postal renovations took place as a result of an incident of protocol in the presidential nomination of General Zachary Taylor in June 1848. Then a popular hero of the Mexican War, the Whig Convention meeting in Philadelphia, nominated Taylor to be its candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

Following the Mexican War, General Taylor lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His fame caused him to receive bundles of fan mail, which, because it was sent "collect", he began to refuse payment on postage, thus sending all such unpaid mail to the dead letter office.

Unofficially, he had heard of his nomination, but when no official notice reached him, he realized that the notification had probably been sent "collect" and that the local postmaster rerouted it with the unwanted and unpaid letters to the dead letter office.

After a month lapse since his nomination, Taylor was ridiculed for not accepting his mail and the incident drew national attention for the necessity of some sort of postal reform to control the practice of sending mail "collect".

This resulted in the Postal Act of 1851, which reduced the postage rate to 3 cents on pre-paid letters, with a 5 cent charge if sent collect. By 1856, it became a requirement that all postage was pre-paid.

When the Poitevent & Favre Lumber Co. began operations in Pearlington in 1867, mail was carried by horse and buggy from Bay St. Louis, over a dirt road, which was more than 20 miles distance. In 1879 the Company purchased a small steam boat to carry the mail between English Lookout, a railway station of the L & N Railroad and Gainesville, a town on the Pearl River 20 miles north of Pearlington. Captain Rod Boardman, then 21 years of age, with one faithful negro fireman, would leave home at 4 a.m. He would end his day as late as 11 p.m., because the boat made two round trips daily. When its whistle sounded at landing stops, almost all the population would showup to meet the Mail Boat. As time passed, the Mail Boat doubled as a

Utilities

Wire Services

The Postal Telegraphy Co. opened for operation in July 1893 with offices in Bay St. Louis. The company had installed poles and wiring along designated routes. *(SCE 3/25/1893)*

Electricity

The Bay St. Louis Ice, Light & Bottling Works, besides engaging in bottling and ice, was the providing source of electricity. The lighting plant was also equipped to furnish power for motors, electric fans, electric flat irons, and the ice plant. In 1912, there were 120 street lights distributed throughout the residential and commercial district. Mr. A.L. Stokoe was its sole proprietor and managed to sell his overproduction to other utility companies.

Water

Artesian well water in Bay St. Louis is found from between 300 to 900 feet. Charles Sanger started the Bay St. Louis Water Works and installed its network of pipes, from which he developed the first water works system that was supplied for local consumption. As more people moved to the Bay, more wells were dug, but the demand was ever increasing, resulting in the city buying Sanger's interest in 1922.

Telephones

The first telephone system in Mississippi was introduced at Vicksburg on January 10, 1881. The first telephone exchange on the Coast was installed in Bay St. Louis with 47 units in August of 1899 and in Pass Christian with 30 telephones in October of 1899.

By 1903, the Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company had 200 subscribers in and around Bay St. Louis. The central exchange burned in its 2nd floor offices of the Planchet Building during the Fire of 1907. It then moved to the 2nd floor of the Sea Coast Echo building. *(SCE 11/23/1907)*

The Automobile Club of Louisiana sent a pioneer car over the Honey Island road on a record breaking trip to Louisiana's playground on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The pacesetting trip was made in two hours and seven minutes, from New Orleans City Hall to Bay St. Louis City Hall. Soon afterwards, a roadway was completed from the Bay to Pearlington, where a bridge was constructed.

Entertainment

Following the Civil War, Orleanians who could afford to do so, escaped the stresses of the Reconstruction Period by diverting to the Coast. It was there that the "Watering Holes" were re-established. However, the first types of entertainment were somewhat mild. They organized concerts in conjunction with other events, such as reported in the following news releases.

> "A Grand Concert was given . . . This will make the Bay a lively and attractive place during the commencement of the week, as the great Southern Regatta is to be run there on Monday, Aug. 29. The Concert is given for the benefit of the Catholic Church at the Bay. *(N.O. Times 8/26/1870)*

A good Squirrel Hunt always provided great sporting entertainment for men folk such as exhibited in this 1893 string of peltries by Gene Joyner, Will Watts and Bud Cuneo. It is reported that Ames Kergosien has charge of the staggering rifle once owned by Gene Joyner at left. The now retired son of Bill Watts, stated that the hunt took place in Honey Island swamps.

As economic times improved, the Coast became more populous and other entertainment was offered such as provided during the 1890s. A social club was organized, called the *In-For-Fun Club*. Each weekend, meetings were held at various member residences where they entertained in addition to making plans for future gala events. Of special favor were the private Balls held, complete with costumes. Club members and special guests were treated to all night dancing and champaign.

> "One of the most prominent and enjoyable events of this gay social season was the fancy dress ball given by the *In-For-Fun* club, Saturday night, at Fireman's Hall. This ball was a success in every particular, . . . it can truly be asserted that this Ball eclipsed all former ones given in Bay St. Louis." *(SCE 9/03/1892)*
>
> "Last night brought truly the social event of all events of the season in the form of a private ball, given in the spacious parlors of the Breath residence, by the members of the *In-For-Fun* club. The affair was an "entre nous" . . . At about 9 o'clock dancing commenced and terminated this morning. Refreshments, etc., were frequently served." *(SCE 9/10/1892)*

Other types of entertainment, offered for the younger set, were hay rides. These wagon trips would usually end up at one of the large pavilions over the Sound where bands were hired to provide music. On other occasions, "tacky-parties" were given in private homes where casual dress for the youthful crowd could become hilarious.

"The costumes worn by the participants were fully up to the requirements that govern such parties, and laughter to no little extent was created," quoted the local news.

There were also stag parties assembled such as the following:

> "The boys all turned out in full blast on Tuesday night and made *Rome howl.* The programme was a big torch light procession and a grand display of fireworks, followed by over a hundred salutes fired from a cannon loaned for the occasion." *(SCE 11/19/1892)*

The Promote Hall, then located at Second and deMontluzin Streets in the 1890s, was favored for its dances to the tunes of local bands. "The *Promote Band* furnished an abundance of good music and the fair and gallant enjoyed the delights of Terpsichorean art until a late hour."

The *Angels of Charity Society* sponsored a Marionette exhibition at Promote Hall as a benefit to raise funds.

The Eclipse Brass Band, headed by Prof. George Combel, played to many local audiences during the Gay 90's. In her chicken house, Mrs. Combel found a four legged-chicken, which was the talk of the town.

On a different lilt was the Champagne Supper given by Mr. M.E. Ansley in honor of his infant daughter's birth. It was held at the C. C. Club on Washington Avenue, "where the artistic taste showed in the decorations of the grand room. The host threw open the doors to the dining hall, where a feast fit for a king was spread. Twas enough to take one's breath. The tables literally groaned under their loads, including all the delicacies of the season. Before each plate stood the silent sentinel, "*Mumms Extra Dry,*" . . . to take the taste out of our mouths," or by those whose "tastes" ran in that direction. Added to this, music by the Cyclone Band, and you have a spread not to be surpassed by even the Four hundred." *(SCE 11/26/1892)*

"*The Great Prize Fight*"

Jim Mace and Joe Coburn stood twelve rounds for a draw decision, was reported in the New Orleans "*Daily Picayune*" in 1871, as having occurred at Montgomery's in the woods west of Bay St.Louis. Ten passenger coaches carried 500 onlookers from New Orleans. Newspapers represented included all the New Orleans papers, and the New York Herald, the World, the Sun-Express, the Times, the St. Louis Dispatch, and the Chicago Post.

"*Bicycle Mania*"

The era of the 1890s brought the "*cycle craze*" to Bay St. Louis, but nobody owned a bicycle, which was remedied by the opening of a bicycle shop. Wheels could be rented for 25 cents an hour, including the "bicycle built for two". Needless to say, it was considered terribly daring for a young lady to ride a bike, but the craze continued. During the Spring of 1896, because bicycles were so popular, the City Council passed an ordinance regulating their use; requiring lamps after dark and unlawful use of sidewalks. A front page editorial condemned "scorching", the term for speeders. Bicycle accidents were reported in the same manner as runaway horses. It was only the automobile that ended the craze.

W.J. Watts of Chattanooga, the inventor of the chainless bicycle mechanism, retired to Bay St. Louis during the early 1900s opening a part-time bicycle repair shop on the beach. *(SCE, Nov. 21, 1896)*

Community Spirit

Independent Hope Hook and Ladder Fire Company, No.1 was organized on March 17, 1870. They sponsored a "Ball" each anniversary.

The *Bay St. Louis Ladies' Mutual Aid Association* was organized at the residence of Mrs. Celine Gardebled, its new President, in January 1893. It was a non-sectarian organization for the purpose of mutually assisting its members in time of sickness, with admittance of married and single ladies. Its name was soon changed to the *Ladies' Minerva Mutual and Aid Association of Bay St. Louis*. One of the ladies suggested that Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and strength, was more appropriate to their endeavor.

To raise funds, they sponsored "Balls", lawn parties, minstrel shows, dance contests, and concerts with music provide by Professor Pate.

In 1851, the *Masons* laid the corner-stone to its Lodge No. 147 in Bay St. Louis. The building, already erected, was celebrated by Masons arriving from Biloxi and Mississippi City, with 150 Pearl River folks arriving by chartered steamboat, the "*Mary A. Moore*". Some 250 to 300 celebrants met under the live oaks at the Bay St. Louis Hotel and marched with stirring music. "Mayor H. Monet, spoke on the history of Masonry, its rise and progress, its adaption for the promotion

The Masonic Temple building, 129 Main Street - The original Lodge building was erected in 1850 on land loaned by John B. Toulme, which was willed to his daughter, Magdeleine. She, in turn, deeded the "Lodge Lot" to the Masons on February 23, 1883. Magdeleine's first husband, deceased, was Evariste V. Saucier and her second marriage was to Anthony J. Breath. In 1925, the first building was razed, and the current 3-story building, designed by Stone Brothers of New Orleans, was built by engineer E. S. Drake. The structure has been been described as a restrained Neo-Classic Revival having been rededicated as the Stokoe Memorial Building.

of good among men, and spoke for nearly two hours to a delighted audience. . . . A Ball was given that evening, which was made doubly brilliant by the splendid regalia of the Masons. Bright-eyed Creole ladies were present in large numbers, and kept up the feast until the gray morning's dawn. I won't tell you about the supper, the champagne, the toasts, sentiments, and head-aches this morning.

What a difference at the Bay than in the city, when lemonades predominate at the latter, "*Cocktails*" prevail here to a most alarming extent. I shall say no more on this subject, for fear my discounts will be cut short. My dozen raw are ready, so "adios." yours, R. B." *(Daily Delta, 6/17/1851)*

CALAMITIES

The Scourge -- *Yellow Fever*

Yellow Fever came to Bay St. Louis in 1853 by way of visitors from other areas as testified by Dr. J.M. Picton. His first case at Bay St. Louis occurred on July 15, 1853, the second on the 17th. The first was a resident of New Orleans, the second had just arrived from Nicaragua. Both were taken on board the steamboat from New Orleans on their passage across the Lake. These were the first cases occurring at the Bay of St. Louis. Previous to this time intermittents prevailed generally. The Doctor returned to New Orleans and could not determine if the disease had spread from these cases. Dr. Picton stated that the disease is communicable from one person to another, wherever the epidemic influence prevails; and expressed that the disease was imported this year. The weather at the Bay of St. Louis was warm during the day and rather cool at night during the latter part of August and first of September. He always observed a peculiar odor in Yellow Fever patients as first noticed in the epidemic of 1847.

Hurricanes

The Gulf Coast is not without its turbulent weather consisting of hurricanes and tornadoes. Recorded ever since the early French settlements, were hurricanes of great calamity in the following years: 1717, 1723, 1746, 1772, 1815, 1893, 1909, and 1915. Without ommission of the significant hurricanes to occur in later years.

Conflagrations

Fire of 1894

"Mr. L. Olivari, whose general merchandise store was formerly known as *Spotorno & Co.*, furnished the first food for one of the most disastrous conflagrations in the history of Bay St. Louis at about half past four o'clock this morning, as it was here where the fire was given birth. The fire created loses that can and never will be correctly estimated, owing to the vastness of the destructive powers of the angry, rushing flames. The origin is not known, but there is every indication to believe it the work of an incendiary. Fanned by the strong wind the fire had soon gained considerable headway and it was plainly evidenced that the entire front square was doomed. This fire has left more than one penniless and homeless, and the president of St. Stanislaus college is out this morning with a subscription list for the benefit of the unfortunate. The list is headed by the college with one hundred dollars cash." *(Sea Coast Echo, 2/17/1894)*

The following is a list of the properties totally destroyed:
L. Olivari, store, warehouse buildings, and two cottages.
August Quintini, one cottage and small shop building.
August Keller, store with contents and two 1-story dwellings.
Charles Sanger's "Mulberry Cottage".
R. Guerra, barber shop, residence and two-story frame building.
W.H. Yenni, one story frame residence and shoe store.

Other properties destroyed belonged to Claud Monti and single and multiple cottages belonging to Mrs. Huber, Mrs. Mendez, Mrs. Bosetto, Mrs. Belleme, Mrs. Pero, Mr. Davis, and A.D. Pierce.

One of the pioneer merchants of Bay St. Louis was George Planchet who operated a dry goods store during the 1890's on Front Street (Beach Blvd.) near Union, known as the Oak Cottage Store. When Mr. Planchet died his business was purchased by Joseph Cazeneuve, former sheriff and tax Collector and in later years as an officer and cashier of the then Hancock County Bank. Then in 1903 Joseph O. Mauffray, a former teen-age clerk in Planchet's store, bought out Cazeneuve and two years later founded the hardware business next door, now known as Mauffray's Hardware. (SCE July 29, 1953)

Fire of 1907

"This morning a fire was discovered about 5 o'clock in Osoinach's (Opera House) Theatre. Immediately north of the big Opera House was located the Merchants Bank while in the same yard, a little westward, stood the handsome home of Walter Gex, the well known attorney. Across the street were located Evans Drug Store, an annex to the Clifton House, a fruit stand, and Miss Josie Welch's Book Store. South of the Opera House extending to the corner of Union Street where the fire was finally brought under control, stretched a number of costly buildings including the Clifton Hotel, St. Joseph's Convent, the Catholic Church, the Planchet Store building, and a

number of private dwellings. The Bay is supplied with very poor fire fighting apparatus and still poorer system of water works. It was only the wide sweep of open country between the Bank and the Pickwick Hotel that kept the latter from going also. The Markey House (Crescent Hotel), one of the old landmarks was gone and the Convent building (St. Joseph's), loved and revered by every Bay St. Louisian - also the Church of Our Lady of the Gulf. Osoinach's Opera House was of recent construction . . . The Merchants Bank was completed about six months ago of brick . . . The Convent consisted of several buildings . . . The Church was a venerable old pile . . . together with the rectory . . ." *(Gulfport Daily Record-Tribune, Nov. 16, 1907)*

"With this conflagration is wiped away one of the oldest landmarks: Father Leduc's beautiful Church of Our Lady of the Gulf with its four dialed town clock and the Bells, which for all these years sounded the different events - joyous and solemn - as was their office to do. There was something almost human when the church clock struck 7:30 just as the steeple which encased it crumbled and fell." *(Sea Coast Echo - Nov. 16, 1907).*

Ignition started in Osoinach's Opera House building, then it spread north to Main Street and South to Bookter Avenue. With easterly winds shooting flaming sparks across narrow Front Street (Beach Avenue), the fire continued its destructive path to include the new Merchant Bank and the entire Catholic compound of church, rectory and two schools, and also crossing at Main Street to level many stores and cottages.

Fire of 1927

On September 4, 1927 a fire broke out on the corner of Main Street and Beach Boulevard destroying six buildings including the Bourgeois Store (100 N. Beach), the Liberty Hotel (formerly L.A. DeMonluzin's first residence), the Muller Cottage, F.C. Bordage's residence and two adjoining structures facing Main Street. The fire stopped spreading when it encountered the A&G Theater, which had been rebuilt of fireproof brick due to its having been destroyed by fire in June of 1924.

Above is the first L.A. de Montluzin Home which was built circa 1885 and later destroyed during the *Fire of 1927.* From the razed property was built the **Bay Emporium** building in 1939.

Bay St. Louis

1925 Onward

In 1928, the 2-mile wooden bridge from Henderson Point and Pass Christian replaced the romantic, but rugged, ferry boat service. This project was the result of Horatio S. Weston, then president of the Board of Supervisors. The bridge transformed Bay St. Louis from an independent and isolated resort town to join with the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast. Bay St. Louis serves as the Western Gateway to the Mississippi Gulf Coast by attracting travelers coming east off of I-10.

This early 1930s Map of Southern Mississippi depicts the Railroad routing along the Coast desinating the stops and depots. There was also an electric car line running from Pass Christian to Biloxi, which locals and sightseers rode before Highway 90 was constructed.

Not even the seven million dollar steel and concrete toll bridge which opened twenty-five years later in August of 1953 was as important as the first highway bridge across the Bay. It united Bay St. Louis with the rest of the Gulf Coast and gave it recognition as one of the "Eight Sister Cities by the Sea".

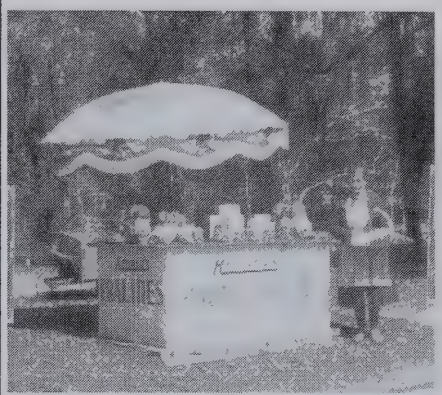
When U.S. Highway 90 through Bay St Louis and Waveland was completed, there were so many praline and gift shops which sprang up, that Bay St. Louis became known as the "*Praline Capitol of the World.*" Paint and neon signs were prolifically posted along-side shell piles. Pralines were made daily in family factories by local residents who used their various special recipes.

Early Bay St. Louis was a health resort with attractions which still remain, such as yachting, boating, sailing, sport fishing, hunting, hammocking and rocking chairs. The community still provides seafood, dairy products, farm fresh vegetables, poultry, fruit orchards, and pecans for both local consumption and export.

The early fishing canneries at the Bay were Peerless Seafood and Dunbar-Dukate. Dave McDonald, President of the Port and Harbor Commission, reflected during an interview that some of the row houses for the factory workers were located at Felicity Street. "Every morning at 5 o'clock A.M., the canneries would blow their whistles if they wanted to hire laborers. Within a few minutes of the trill signal, the laborers would trudge down to the factories," McDonald recounted.

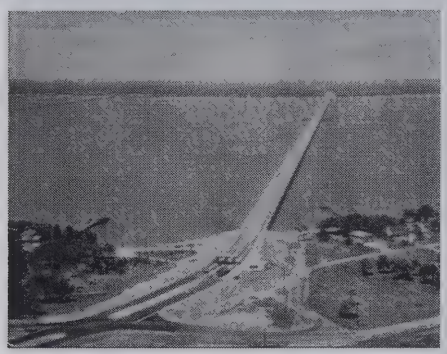
"During the early 1900s, large, live turtles were shipped in by train to a turtle canning factory. These turtles were placed on their backs to keep them from moving while being transported. They were considered a delicacy since each part of the turtle provided different exotic flavors," continued McDonald. From another reporting, Horatio Weston exclaimed, "They say turtles have seven different flavors in their meat and a negro named Charlie sold veal, fish, beef, chicken, lamb, sandwiches all made from turtle meat. He was very popular with train passengers."

The seawall was started in 1915 and completed in the 1920s. It began its construction at Bayou Caddy and continued through Lakeshore, Clermont Harbor, Waveland, Bay St. Louis and around the Bay to the mouth of the Jourdan River where Casino Magic is located today. W.A. McDonald & Sons Feed & Wholesale -- besides selling groceries, dry goods, and sundries -- would also make daily deliveries of one or two truck loads of cement bags to the seawall sites. At that time, the cement was mixed by hand and also with gasoline mixers as the seawall was being constructed. It was a vertical wall and constructed to prevent erosion and storm damage.



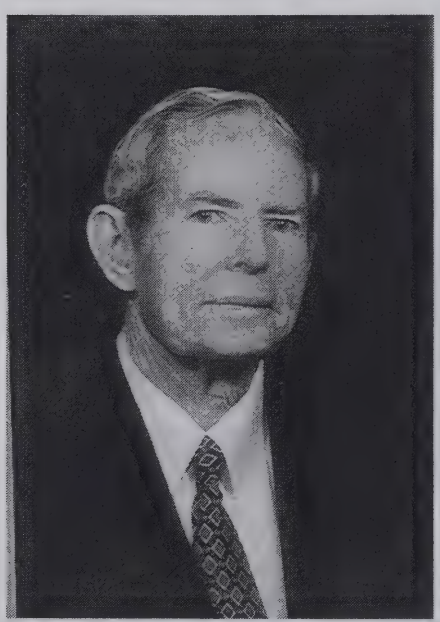
Praline Capitol of the World
The stretch of U.S. Highway 90 through Bay St. Louis was the habitation of many family praline shops -- each with their own secret recipe.

The Charles Breath home, 616 N. Beach, was originally built in 1819 by Dimitry Canna. In 1898, the cupola and the right wing were added to the nuclear core of the residence.



The $8.5-million Bridge

With the new cement bridge and the newly diverted Highway 90, a boon of tourism was entertained at the Bay as many visitors stopped to browse and bathe or to stay the night or week-end.



Dave McDonald, President of the Port and Harbor Commission, has served as a member continuously since 1973.

As the wall was completed, sand was pumped in behind the seawall to strengthen it. Horatio Weston reported that following the Hurricane of 1915, "I was about seven years old and remember vividly my father brought me to see the effects of the storm. None of the buildings were destroyed in the area where sand had been pumped behind the wall, but the unfilled end had been destroyed."

Artesian well water in Bay St. Louis can be found from between 300 to 900 feet. Charles Sanger developed the first water works system which he supplied for local consumption. More wells were soon dug, but the demand was ever increasing, resulting in the city buying Sanger's interest in 1922. A bond issue was floated to provide for two reservoirs, a tower, a pumping station, and electric hydraulic pumps.

Dave McDonald, reporting on the history of Mississippi Power Electricity, recounted that the Power company's expansion took place with its purchase of the Stokoe Ice Plant in Bay St. Louis. Its over-production of electricity was sold to other utility users.

Reviewing his family's heritage, Dave Mc Donald stated that W.A. McDonald came to Bay St. Louis in 1904 with his wife and two children. They arrived from Holly Springs, Mississippi and bought the Green Feed Company and its building located at the L&N track just northwest of the present depot. They remained there until 1926 and built their new building at the corner of Easterbrook and Toulme, naming the business W.A. McDonald & Sons Feed & Wholesale and primarily selling groceries, dry goods and sundries. Later they provided building materials, but the biggest commodity was in tobacco related items. They became a Distributor for all brands of Tobaccos, cigarettes, cigars, wrapping papers selling to large and small companies from Atlanta to Ft. Worth. They were very successful as a Jobber in the tobacco industry while selling to large chains. The Tobacco industry would not sell to directly to retailers because they demanded guaranteed payment within 10 days. Therefore, deliveries were drop-shipped to McDonald customers who extended them credit, however McDonald had to make direct payments to the Manufacturer within 10 days. In the late 1930s, the Mississippi Tobacco Tax disrupted the Jobber business, resulting in McDonald reselling only to established large firms such as Schwegmann's, Louisiana Wholesale Grocers, Walgreen's and large chains. The youngest grandson, Jim McDonald carries on the family business as a sole owner.

In 1958, Dave McDonald started his own business primarily in Building materials but once concrete slab sub-flooring became a standard in construction, Dave's business centered on flooring materials until he sold out and retired in 1990.

Dave McDonald is President of the Port and Harbor Commission, which was founded in 1963. He has served as a member for nearly 25 years with outstanding performance, which has been regarded by each succeeding supervisor in his home district, as observed by his reappointments.

The Port and Harbor Commission is governed by seven commissioners, five appointed from each of the five County Supervisors and two from the Governor with recommendations from each of the municipal governments of Bay St. Louis and Waveland. The Commission is responsible for Economic Development of the County in addition to the Port Bienville Development Park, Stennis Airport, and the Industrial Parks at Port Bienville and at Stennis.

The area of Cedar Point, near Paradise Point and Harrison Court was developed during the 1920s as a subdivision. It was complete with sidewalks, curbs, and streets and even had electric light posts of cast iron with ornate lamp globes before Dunbar Avenue was put through. Dave McDonald claimed that he use to hunt the area during highschool years from 1935 to 1938 after the area had turned back to woods and thickets.

Even before then, as early as 1892, Cedar Point was described as a *Booming Locality* and referred to as a progressive and attractive city. Lot sales and land development in Cedar Point was being promoted by Charles Cowand.

Cedar Point - A Booming Locality

"The locality of our progressive and attractive city known as Cedar Point is not backward in the least towards its advancement and material growth. We are reliably informed that nearly all the rear lots are being purchased by strangers and will soon be sites of some very pretty residences. Mr. Charles Cowand, so progressive and wide awake, is to erect two neat and pretty cottages on his land, and expects to have them completed before many weeks. Other improvements about Cedar Point are being contemplated. The canning factory is an important factor towards the development and building of that section, and we may add that more factories will not harm the place." *(SCE 12/10/1892)*

Jesse Cowand had a large, *Sea-Island* cotton plantation where he began construction of *"Elmwood Manor"* before the War of 1812. It was completed in 1825 on the land grant formerly owned by Melite Lassassier. The manor is located on N. Beach between Boardman and Leonhard.

Development Trends

Since the early 1960s, Hancock County has seen significant urban growth and is Mississippi's second fastest growing county. Urbanization has been spurred on mainly by the development of the NASA Stennis Space Center and from spill-over growth from Biloxi-Gulfport and New Orleans Metro Areas. Between 1980 and 1990, Hancock County's population increased by 30%, from 24,357 residents to 31,760. Most of the recent growth has occurred in unincorporated parts of the county, such as Diamondhead. During the last decade, Bay St. Louis' population grew from 7,850 inhabitants to 8,063.

The Old City Hall was built in 1905. It was heralded by the Mississippi Department of Archives as an historic landmark.

The increasing Hancock County population has placed much demand on Bay St. Louis, which is the County Seat, serving governmental, commercial and professional benefits. Much of the retail development that has occurred in Bay St. Louis during the last 35 years has been away from its traditional downtown, and diverted to the City's well-traveled main thoroughfare, U.S. Highway 90.

However, the City's downtown area merchants and residents together, have stimulated a renaissance of economic prosperity and cultural heritage appreciation. The Downtown Bay Area has become a regional arts mecca, due to revitalizing its antique stores, art galleries, specialty shops, eateries and entertainment establishments that have located there. Much of the energy is also contributed to the nature of its core center, which has remained as the prime location for the county's professional and financial offices, as well as for its public services.

Local residents continue to seek Downtown Bay St. Louis for socializing and conducting their normal business arrangements. The major visitor attractions for Hancock County are; "Historic Old Town" and beaches, the Casino Magic gaming and resort complex, the Diamondhead resort area, and the Stennis Space Center.

Today, Bay St. Louis is a relaxed, easy-to-live-in sort of town with true and warm friendliness which extols the predominant trait of its people. They appreciate the serenity and tranquility which is found in this fascinating residential community with many churches, good schools and work opportunities within commuting distances.

Entrepreneurial craftsmen, artisans and professionals have rejuvenated the downtown, "*old-town's*" charm and heritage, offering retail goods, services, dining, and entertainment to tourists and local townsfolk alike.

City Government
In the early 1970s, Bay St. Louis became the first city in Mississippi to adopt the mayor-council form of government.

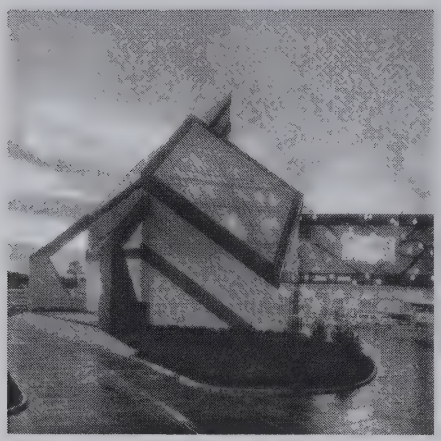
Mayor Eddie Favre rode to his innauguration in an old fashioned limosine. His many friends and supporters attended the innauguration held at the City Park where the old City Hall is located.

The municipal school system, with boundaries that extend beyond the city limits, is made up of two elementary schools, a junior high school, and a senior high school. There are also three private schools, Christ Episcopal School, Our Lady's Academy for girls, and St. Stanislaus for boys.

Bay St. Louis has developed new strip shopping centers and added new apartment complexes. There are numerous playgrounds located throughout the city as well as tennis courts and ball fields for Little League and soccer games. There are public piers extending into the Mississippi Sound which invite residents to fish or crab or toss out their cast nets. Seasonal events include regattas, golf tournaments, Mardi Gras parades and balls, fishing rodeos, a Home and Garden Pilgrimage sponsored by the local Garden Clubs, and year-round performances at the Bay St. Louis Little Theater. Civic clubs, sportsmen groups, and hobby clubs all invite participation. Something for everyone is not an unprecedented claim in this friendly small city; the choice is entirely up to the individual.

Annual events of the Blessings of the Fleet, Crab Festivals, Regattas, Candlelight visits to the Cemetery on Halloween, Mardi Gras, Tours of Historic Homes and Gardens; each contributes to the continuation of tradition and family oriented fun-filled days, nights and week-ends.

During the Spring and Summer months, throngs of visitors bid for parking spaces along the "Old Town" narrow streets and along Historic Beach Avenue.



Casino Magic
Dockside Gambling zoning changes were effected in 1991. Site approval was issued by the City Council in December 1991.

Needless to say, much of the current renovation and restoration of Bay St. Louis and Hancock County is due to the stimulation of the Gaming Casinos in Mississippi. In 1988, the U.S. Congress permitted gambling at Indian reservations, which expanded rapidly to 20 states. This revitalized the long-time interests for gambling along the Mississippi Coast, which had already been introduced late in 1987 with gambling cruise ships into the Gulf of Mexico. This was followed in 1990 with the passage of favorable legislation which permitted designated counties to be allowed dockside gambling provided that the local citizens voted approval. Hancock County was the first to approve gambling in a special election on December 5, 1990. This passage resulted in call to Marlin Torguson who had just completed a successful Hotel and Gaming venture in South Dakota. Consequently, **Casino Magic** opened its doors at Bay St. Louis on September 30, 1992. One other casino had opened and closed in the County, while another, ***Casino World***, is moving through the slow paces of permit approvals.

Old Town
A Place Apart
Tercentennial

Bay St. Louis is distinguished as **A Place Apart** and truly so --- and with further good reason, **Old Town** characterizes this historic place epitomized by its compact business community. It is cozied atop the very same bluffs where d'Iberville's brother, Bienville, had camped and hunted the rich game that prevailed throughout the area's wilderness in 1699. This young man, at the time of arrival, only 19 years of age, participated in or directed the establishment of many colonial settlements. In 1699, at Ocean Springs (*Fort Maurepas of Old Biloxi*); in 1702, at Mobile (*Fort Louis*); in 1714, at Natchitoches; in 1716, at Natchez (*Fort Rosalie*); in 1718, at New Orleans (*Place d'Armes*); in 1720, at Biloxi (*Fort Louis of New Biloxi*), and as far north as Detroit (Fort Chartres and Kaskaskia).

It was left to those who followed in his footsteps to clear the wilderness along the bluff ridges and to lay-out the shell roads which became Front Street (Beach Boulevard) and the road to Pearl River (now Main Street) creating the foundation for many streets to access the community of Shieldsborough (now Bay St. Louis). Not unlike today, the first businesses were general merchandise stores, drugstores, mercantile and feed stores, and saloons.

Old Town survives with continued magnetism, heritage, and engaging gulf vistas.

Beach Boulevard in 1894
Corner of Main Street and Front Road, now Beach Boulevard

The Hancock Bank -- 1899-1999
A Century of Serving Customers

A Beacon of Trust.
The Ship Island Lighthouse stood erect as a welcoming friend to ship captains and fishermen of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

For more than a century, the Ship Island Lighthouse guided sailors and ship captains to safe harbor along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Through the years the Ship Island Lighthouse stood strong in the face of nature's wrath, remaining steadfast as a welcoming friend. Embracing the Ship Island Lighthouse as its hallmark, Hancock Bank has been prominent in guiding the Mississippi Gulf Coast through its current economic successes.

Hancock Bank - A Centurion

On the evening of August 29, 1899, prominent businessmen of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, gathered at the Hancock County Courthouse to organize a bank for the city's manifest needs. Nineteen subscribers were present, representing a total of 198 shares, and these shareholders elected a board of directors.

A small frame building located on South Beach next to the Saint Joseph Academy was rented for the sum of seven dollars a month, and on October 9, 1899, it was formally opened as **Hancock County Bank**. Opening-day capitalization was $10,000 and deposits amounted to $8,277.41.

Within a few weeks the Board purchased a site at the corner of Main Street and South Beach and began planning for a new building. A contract was awarded to John T. McDonald for $5,100 on March 1, 1900, to construct a facility which included a vault. This was the first two-story brick building in Bay St. Louis, which housed the bank, the post office, and the U.S. Customs Office.

Hancock County Bank's first Home. In 1899, this Bay St. Louis cottage opened its doors to generate from $10,000 capitol, to that which is the largest financial institute on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

When the Illinois Central Systems purchased the Gulf & Ship Island Railroad in 1925, a real estate boom was created along the coast. Business flourished and the Hancock County Bank grew as well. With the stock market crash in 1929, financial institutions failed throughout the United States, and eventually the City of Gulfport had no bank. Because Hancock County Bank had successfully weathered the Great Depression, a delegation of Gulfport citizens headed by Mayor Joe Milner, editor Clayton Rand, and Chamber of Commerce president J.C. Rich appealed to the bank to open an office in Gulfport.

On August 15, 1932, a new Branch office was opened on the corner of 13th Street and 26th Avenue. In 1938, the Bank Charter was revised changing the name from Hancock County Bank to **Hancock Bank** and moving its Headquarters to Gulfport. In July 1939, the Bank moved to 25th Avenue and 14th Street.

From the beginning, under the leadership of its five presidents; Peter Hellwege, Eugene Roberts, Horatio S. Weston, Leo W. Seal, Sr., and Leo W. Seal, Jr. -- Hancock Bank assumed the role of being a ***Service Oriented Financial Institution*** -- always ready to meet the needs of its customers.

- In 1902, Hancock Bank was the first Mississippi bank to conduct branch banking on a boat. The Pearlington Branch operated one day a week out of the mail boat *Margaret.* Each Friday, the bank manager would board the L&N train at Bay St. Louis, traveling to southwest Hancock County where he would then catch the mail boat servicing the sawmill community. He would issue cashier's checks, handle deposits and withdrawals and even make loans on the floating Branch Bank.
- In 1917, the Bank acquired and placed on loan to sheep-farmers, high quality breeding rams in order to upgrade the quality of their sheep flocks.
- In the early 1920s the Bank purchased the entire bonding issue for the construction of the *Old Spanish Trail* roadway, which was the forerunner of Old Highway 90.
- Prior to construction of the old wooden Bay bridge in 1928, the Bank financed the old steamboat ferry, which operated between Bay St. Louis and Henderson Point.
- Following World War II, the Bank procured mechanical tree planters which were placed on loan to encourage reforestation.
- In the early 1950s, the Bank became Trustee for the $9.2 million construction bond issue of the cement toll bridge crossing the Bay.
- During the early 1960s, the Bank interceded for the relocation of landowners displaced by NASA's acquisition of nearly 140,000 acres for the Stennis Space Center.

The Bank had sound footing from its very beginnings. The first two presidents, Hellwege and Roberts, were also presidents of large established banks in New Orleans.

When Horatio Weston of the great Weston Lumber Company assumed presidency of Hancock Bank in 1918, he immediately placed the banking administration in the hands of Leo Seal, Sr., had proved himself as an able employee of the Weston Mill. Growth and expansion and safeguard policies were instituted as indicated by new Branch offices, expanded services, and continued mergers and acquisitions. When Mr. Seal, Sr. died in 1963, following a 31-year administration, he had successfully steered the Bank through the Great Depression and had seen the bank's assets multiply from $1.7 million to nearly $42 million.

Leo Seal, Sr. and Leo Seal, Jr., both hailing from Bay St. Louis, staged by example, leadership for Hancock Bank's destiny for more than 65 years.

Hancock County Bank - 1900-Present
This was the first two-story brick building in Bay St. Louis, which was built for $5,100 including the vault. Occupied in September of 1900, it housed the bank, post office, and U.S. Customs Office. It is still open today -- and the Bank Manager is Jerry Heitzmann.

One Hancock Plaza - Headquarters
The Hancock Bank corporate offices rise above the City of Gulfport and overlooks the port facilities as well as Ship Island where once stood its emblematic Lighthouse.

When Leo Seal, Jr. took the helm in 1963, as the new "*Lighthouse Keeper*" and President, the Gulf Coast economy was at a cross-road; -- but he was schooled -- and he was experienced -- and he was ready. Leo Seal, Jr. had worked in every department of the Hancock Bank -- from office-runner to serving on the Bank's Board of Directors. He generated diversification, innovation, and expansion. He engineered the construction of the bank's new corporate Headquarter's building -- the imposing fifteen-story **One Hancock Plaza**, which was completed in 1982, had the distinction of being the tallest coastline building between Port Arthur, Texas and Tampa, Florida.

Leo Seal, Jr. has remained steadfast in getting the best for the Mississippi Gulf Coast, including new industry ventures which create employment and taxes. Even when syndicate underwriters made eleventh hour reversals, through alert maneuvering, new syndicated partnerships were formed with the Bank's committed support.

With undaunted initiative, courage and untiring efforts, the Bank has affixed the stamp of character unto the business of banking. To thousands of depositors and countless others, the **HANCOCK BANK** suggests strength, stability and integrity. This institution was founded on the principles of honor and service and has always been managed by men who regard banking as a Public Trust.

It is for these reasons that Hancock Bank was listed among *Veribanc's Top 50 Safest Banks in the United States.*

Hancock County is home to five office locations. Bay St. Louis Downtown, Bay St. Louis Highway 90, Diamondhead, Stennis Space Center, and Waveland. --And, throughout South Mississippi there are more than 50 Hancock Bank Handy24 ATMs providing independent banking transactions. Automated Teller Machine services are available every hour of each day, every day of the week, including Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays.

From a little one-room office in 1899, with a capital of $10,000, **HANCOCK BANK** has become the largest bank on the Mississippi Gulf Coast with 40 Branch offices in Mississippi and another 40 branch offices in Louisiana, the bank claims Assets above $2.5 Billion.

W.A. McDonald & Sons

The Red Hots of Bay St. Louis

The arrival of McDonalds to the American scene dates before the Declaration of Independence. The first McDonald, John, a former innkeeper, arrived from Scotland's Isle of Skye in 1774. A descendant, W.A. McDonald, Jr. left his birthplace in the Tennessee hills to apply himself to chores and self-education, and following varying successes, moved to Holly Springs, Mississippi. There he established a furniture business and a family with two children. The lure of adventure brought W.A., wife Edna and children, Carl C. and Mary, to Bay St. Louis in 1904.

Edna immediately fell in love with an impressive cottage fronting the beach at the corner of *Front* and *Heel and Toe* (McDonald Lane) streets, now 502 N. Beach. Without hesitation, she resolved that her family would remain in Bay St. Louis, with a five-dollar deposit, she promptly negotiated the purchase of her new home on the beachfront.

The McDonald's were successful in their businesses. W.A. opened a general store at Main and Second Street, which he called the "*Red Hot*" and later followed by another "*Red Hot*" located at the head of DeMontluzin Street on the beach-bluff. Expanding the family with another son, John and later, C.C. Sr., and additional product lines, Mr. "W.A." acquired properties and warehouse space adjacent to the L&N Railroad which eventually became established as **W.A. McDonald and Sons**, typifying the significance of close family ties in uniting the McDonald heritage.

Following Mr. W.A.'s death in 1944, his wife continued as an active partner until she passed away in 1967 at age 97. Her sons, C.C. Sr. and John died in 1979, passing the torch to new descendants and now headed by James McDonald. Not only had the McDonald family clan become established, but likewise, a dynasty of local businesses and benefactors to community service.

W.A. McDonald and Sons continues under the management of James C. McDonald, son of C.C. McDonald, Sr. **Jim and Winnie McDonald** operate the business in the same fashion which made it successful -- by remaining versatile and innovative in offering products that are durable, top quality and which meet the needs of their clientele. Further, they maintain the golden attribute of knowledgeable and experienced support. As an **Ace Hardware Home Center** and by handling such products as Devoe Paints and Hotpoint and GE appliances, they are leaders in the construction and home products business.

W.A. McDonald and Sons preserves its "Old Timey" feelin' at its location on Toulme and Easterbrook streets alongside the railroad tracks. They offer building materials, lumber and hardware items and are most proud of their service staff who are experienced in assisting homeowners with restoration and renovation problems.

Bay Emporium
"L'Endroit des Cadeaux Uniques"

BAY EMPORIUM
104 N. Beach Boulevard
Old Town Bay St. Louis
467-7030

"A Menagerie of Unique Stores"

Fine Furnishings and Antiques
Home Accessories, Gifts, and Collectibles
Works of Art, Baskets and Pottery
Florals, Cards and Candles
Estate Jewelry and Vintage Watches
Bountiful delights for personal enjoyment

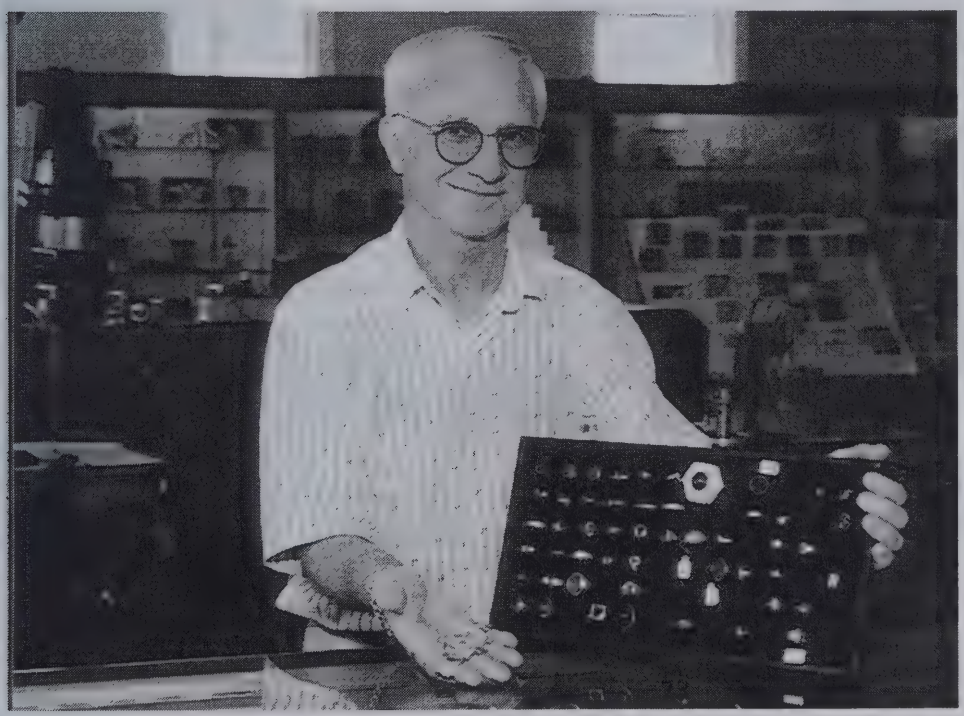
Truly, "*A Menagerie of Unique Shops*", the **Bay Emporium** is ensconced atop the Bay Bluffs, entrenched amidst a community settlement which is steeped in a bountiful and historic past. The unsuspecting traveler is presented with a sense of tantalizing nostalgia upon crossing the threshold to discover the various distinctive shops, which are filled with oodles of treasures and curios from the past and present. Fine arts, crafts, jewelry, and furniture with accouterments to mix and match.

This habitat is affectionately known as the *Ramsey Building* by local townsfolk. The structure was built in 1939 by Dr. B.L. Ramsey and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The two-story brick building with its stucco facade is symbolic for the stepped ornamentation of its second floor, north-corner. This location is commonly known as the "Hub" of the business district for Old Town Bay St. Louis. It once housed a huge Department Store with a Beauty Shop on its mezzanine level, and Dr. Ramsey's dental offices were housed on the second floor.

"Catch of the Day" by Carl Wagner
Typical of the many selections to be found at the **Bay Emporium** are such as this American Sculptor, who uses subjects of wild animals that inhabit the Rocky Mountains. Using Bronze as his medium and produced in limited quantities, his artworks rapidly appreciate in value.

Jeanette Lane, the gracious owner of the **Bay Emporium**, makes frequent trips each year to special buyers' markets where she acquires the delightful selections of antiques, gifts and accessories which she stocks. Satisfying customers special interests is an art-form as well as the warm hospitality she exhibits to all who enter her shop, Jeanette is a master.

That haven in the **Bay Emporium**, known as ***Don Goudeau Antiques***, is cultivated by years of experience in recognizing quality and the preciousness of vintage watches and superior estate jewelry. Nostalgic collectibles range from the adroit connoisseur for fine cameras to those with a fondness for unusual cigarette lighters. Don Goudeau chooses each item in his *collections* with the candor afforded to those who delight in acquiring each item discriminatingly for themselves.



Exquisite Marine selections are but a few of the many ornate items which are acquired from market places by Jeanette.

Accessories for the home and patio or Florida Room include a variety of baskets, pottery, floral arrangements, lamps, racks, and serving dishes. All are lovely gifts for friends, or as a gratifying self-treat.

Bay Town Inn
Bed and Breakfast

Located in the *Olde Towne Historic District* **Bay Town Inn** faces the beach. This historic home was built atop one of the highest bluffs along the Bay. Originally called the *de Montluzin House*, it was erected in 1899 by L.A. de Montluzin, a journalist and scholarly professor who emigrated from France in 1855 to establish a school for boys in New Orleans. In 1878, following the Civil War and Reconstruction Era, he relocated to the Bay to establish a pharmacy which he had built on the beachfront near Court Street. Reportedly, it was the first business establishment at Bay St. Louis and it had narrowly missed the 1907 Fire which destroyed many downtown businesses.

His wife refused to learn the "barbaric" English language while raising six children. Of the four boys, one an engineer for the Panama Canal, two were pharmacists, and the fourth, René, a physician who inherited the home where he survived until age 92.

The picturesque de Montluzin house is a superbly detailed, two-story, frame hip-roofed Colonial Revival dwelling. The 5-bay inset gallery is embraced with squared embellished columns and a large two windowed dormer rising above the central entrance bay. Its grounds and historic grand live oak are captivating with its surrounding white picket fence.

Bay Town Inn
Bed and Breakfast
208 North Beach Boulevard
Ann Tidwell, Owner-Manager
(228) 466-5870 (800)533-0407

The Bay Town Inn Bed and Breakfast is the historic home of the deMontluzin Family and is listed on the National Regeister of Historic Places. The turn of the century home features high ceilings, huge cypress doors, crystal chandeliers, and a mixture of many antique styles and periods.

BAY TOWN INN is one of the few accomodations on the Gulf Coast that has a waterfront view not obstructed by busy traffic or buildings which hinder the magnificence of being on the water's edge. **Bay Town Inn** is located on Beach Boulevard in Old Town Bay St. Louis along a ribbon of sand beaches and a scenic drive which traverses along the bluffs and ridge of the seashore from Bayou Caddy, near the Pearl River, to Cedar Point, near the Casino Magic.

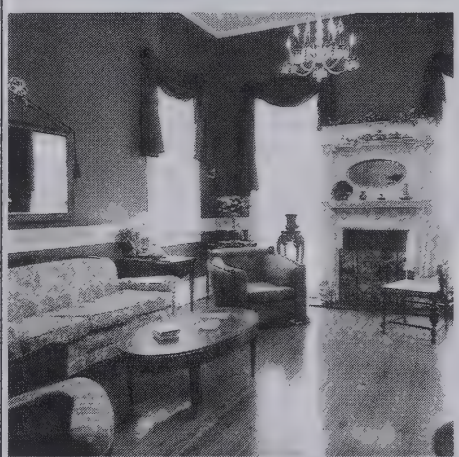
Unquestionably a relaxing getaway, the exquisite, historic **Bay Town Inn** is situated just next door to shopping, dining, dancing, entertainment, and the charm of the Old Town District -- all within immediate walking distance.

The de Montluzin home has remained unchanged as shown by the 1914 photograph at left including a nanny minding the children at the foot of the entrance stairway.

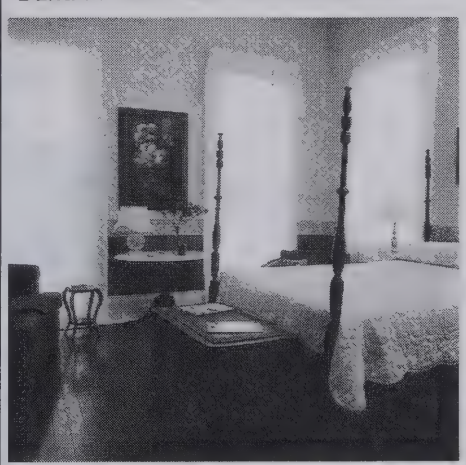
Typical for that era, the renowned home was built over the foundation of the previous dwelling which had its origins in the 1820s. The ceilings are over 12 feet high, cypress doors stand 8-foot tall, and the parlor and dining rooms are divided by sliding doors. With 5,000 square feet of living area, the house consists of seven spacious and comfortable bedrooms with ornate ceiling fans and private baths. Each room is personalized with its own unfolding story of mystique. Downstairs are the de Montluzin Room and Martha's Room. Upstairs: Nellie's, Miss Bea's, Josephine's, Willa Dean's and the Julius' Room. Each is richly adorned with antique furniture and tastefully decorated with European and local art-works.

The owner, Ann Tidwell, invites her guests to use the living room for reading or relaxing and to enjoy the sea-breezes which pervades the open gallery year-round. The breathtaking view over the Bay is saluted by the sunrise and the moonlit beams upon the surf. The Dining Room offers a delightful breakfast which is heartily served at one's leisure and personal temperament.

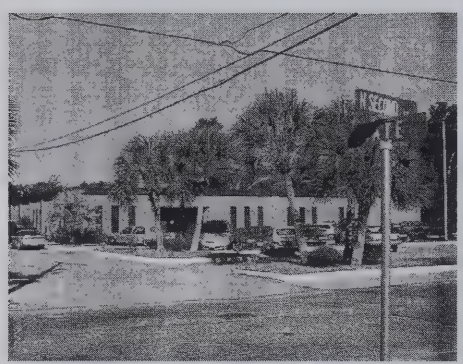
Historic Note: L.A. de Montluzin's father was one of Napoleon's staff officers who became famous at the Battle of Waterloo. Prior to that engagement, the Emperor pinned a medal on de Montluzin. At Waterloo, one of Wellington's troops shot de Montluzin, whose life was spared when the medal deflected the bullet. Several years later, Napoleon granted large tracts of land in Louisiana to his distinguished aids, one of these properties became the vast "de Montluzin Tract" comprising of much of New Orleans East.

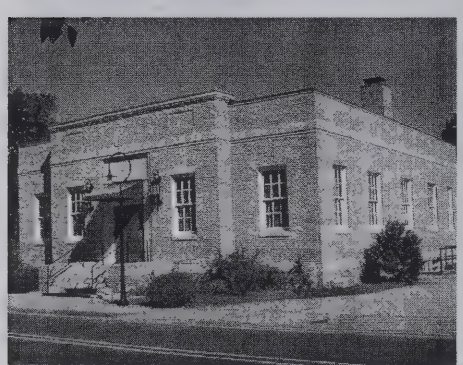


Guests invitingly partake in relaxing in the spacious Living Room over a cup of coffee and browse the local newspapers. The Morning Menu includes a country breakfast of eggs, sausage, bacon or ham, grits, coffee, juice, homemade biscuits, and a treat of ***Ms. Ann's famous Banana Nut bread or muffins.***



Bay Technical Associates





Bay Technical Associates, Inc., was founded in 1976. General Manager, Charles R. Ramsey was awarded a contract to produce specialized electronic data gathering instruments for the Federal Government. Growth over more than twenty years has been phenomenal and rewarding to the dedication of astute teamwork.

Over the years, **BayTech's** product line and customer base has steadily expanded. This innovative high-tech company is an industry leader, known for dependable, affordable data communications products and superior technical support.

The company's original products were designed and manufactured specifically to meet the needs of federal agencies. With astute management, in 1982, the company entered commercial markets with its successful introduction of environmental and communications products.

In 1987, **BayTech** was once more challenged to enter the government market with its new manufactured line of satellite data collection test sets. Its reputation for quality design and manufacturing, safeguarded by quality assurance and technical support, is exemplary; resulting in its hallmark of success and achievement.

For its commercial accounts, **BayTech** designs, produces, tests and services several types of data communication devices. Including: remote site management, data acquisition/control, remote power control, multiplexers, modems, printer sharing solutions and network devices which increases performance for its client-base by multifunction and sharing of resources.

Product marketing is performed through direct sales and by a worldwide network of distributors and resellers. Approximately one-third of its products are exported. From these efforts, **BayTech** has been recognized locally as a recipient of the Hancock County Award of Excellence for its success in the worldwide marketplace and for its contributions to the community. **BayTech** has also received the highly honored President's "E" Award presented by the U.S. Department of Commerce. This recognition is given to those companies who distinguish themselves in international trade, economic stimulation and the generation of jobs.

Each year, **BayTech** has had the vision necessary to keep up with the rapidly changing needs of the information technology equipment industry. The innovation and creativity of **Bay Tech's** people and capabilities of its facilities make it possible for the company to maintain its strong presence in the Data Communications business.

COMMUNITY CHURCHES

Our Lady of the Gulf
228 South Beach Boulevard

Founded in 1847, during the early and formative periods of the Catholic Church throughout the coastal areas and in to the backwoods, mass and other ceremonies were conducted primarily in French. Even after the region joined the United States, the priests and pastors continued to be French until the Irish clergy became the predominant religious orders following the Civil War.

The first appointed resident Pastor at Bay St. Louis was Father Louis Stanislaus Mary Buteux, who served from July 31, 1847 to November 17, 1859.

The first church was a brick Gothic style structure measuring 165 feet 7 inches long and 47 feet wide, which was blessed by Bishop Chanche on August 19, 1849.

With the help of the Christian Brothers order, Father Buteux opened a two-room frame schoolhouse for boys on September 1, 1852. However, Yellow Fever closed it until its reopening in June, 1854, with the Brothers of the Sacred Heart taking charge of administration and teaching. It converted to a boarding school in 1856, and was named for Buteux's patron saint, St. Stanislaus. He then promoted the opening of St. Joseph's girls's school with the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph on January 6, 1855.

Buteux was followed by Father Henry LeDuc as pastor from November 17, 1859 to August 27, 1897. During his administration, a free school for boys, called the "Sorbonne", was opened under the direction of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

In 1867, in order to defray the cost of remodeling the church, Father LeDuc sponsored an instrumental and vocal concert. In the church records he wrote, "It brought me nearly $500. There were about 800 persons present . . ." Soon afterwards, he promoted a fair, ". . . by the protection of God and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, brought about $1200. The balance of the debt amounting to about $800 was covered with the pew-rent and collection of the church." He reported 85 boarders at St. Stanislaus College and 45 boarders at St. Joseph Girls Academy.

The Catholic Cemetery was established at Bay St. Louis on December 22, 1872.

The third pastor was Father Florimond J. Blanc, who served from January 1, 1898 to June 14, 1903. He was followed by Father Aloise van Waesberghe, who served from July 1, 1903 to April 6, 1906.

The next pastor was Father John Prendergast, who served from December 1897 to January 1918. On Saturday, November 16, 1907, St. Joseph Academy, the church of Our Lady of the Gulf and the Catholic rectory were destroyed by fire.

Our Lady of the Gulf
Prior to the Fire of 1907, the steeple of OLG Catholic Church could be seen for miles across the Mississippi Sound. St. Joseph's Academy, to the left of the church, was also destroyed by the fire, which took most of the Bay St. Louis business district.

The present new church was built in Romanesque design, measuring a width of 65 feet and a depth of 149 feet. The first mass was celebrated on December, 13, 1908.

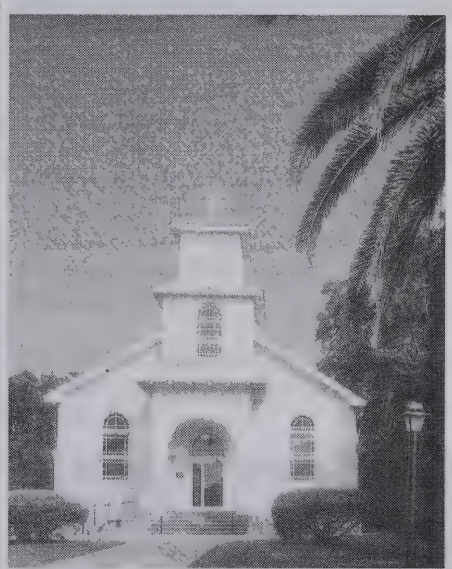
Father Andrew Gmelch took the helm on January 17, 1918. As a good administrator, it was his job to complete the new church with furnishings and stained windows as well as the task of paying off its incurred building debts.

During his administration, he welcomed the Fathers of Divine Word to establish St. Augustine's Mission House which took over the Negro school in 1923 and the establishment of St. Rose of Lima.

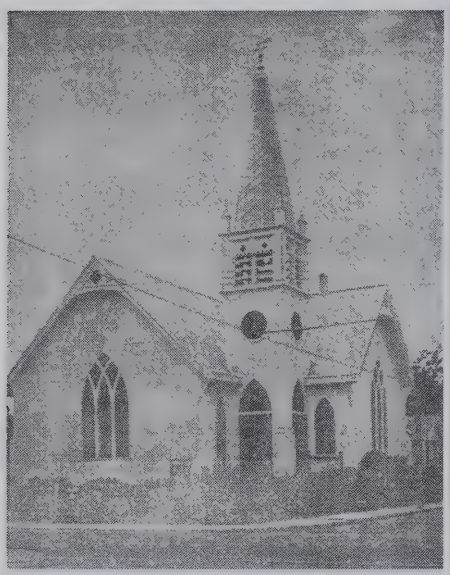
St. Rose de Lima Church
301 S. Necaise Avenue

In 1923, the Mission House for Negroes was moved from Greenville, Mississippi to Bay St. Louis, headed by Father F.X. Baltes who promoted the growth of the school and a new church which he became pastor of was completed on November 14, 1926.

A visit to St. Rose is a must for any visitor to Bay St. Louis. The charismatic charm and sounds eminating from its Gospel Choir is well known throughout the Coast and New Orleans songfests. The famous Choir has performed far and wide, having its own mark of distinction.



The St. Rose de Lima Choir provides a magnificent dimension to its Gospel Ministry.



Main Street United Methodist Church
Corner of Main and Second Streets

Organized in 1852, as the St. John's Methodist Church, services commenced in 1859, in a small building on lands deeded over to the Church Trustees by Jean Baptiste Toulmé. The need for a parsonage was remedied by another deed of gift presented by John Victor Toulmé, the son of Jean Baptiste.

The present Gothic designed, Church building was erected in 1895 and even yet as an incomplete edifice was dedicated in 1897, by Bishop Charles B. Galloway. In 1936, an educational annex was constructed and new lands and the former church building were acquired in 1944.

A Centennial Anniversary celebrated the Church's origins with all-day services and commemorations on December 7, 1952 and again celebrated its 125th year, in 1977, with the dedication of a new Educational Building.

The Methodist Day Care Center was opened in 1980 and a parking lot was acquired in 1991.

First Baptist Church
141 Main Street

In a revival of the Baptist faith's activities in Bay St. Louis, an organization of Trustees was headed by Reverend J.J. Mathis in 1895, thus acquiring the land at Easterbrook and Toulme Streets.

With the commencement of the church building and several inspiring services, on April 19, 1896, a formal organizational meeting was held. However, it was not until 1902, that the Church group addressed once more the matter of reorganizing and strengthening their faith by "going forward." The new mission church continued to struggle in building its congregants. By 1915, church support began to reap greater benefits.

In 1945, the present church site was deeded by gift from Dr. T.B. Sellers. In the same year, Reverend J.T. Dearing became the Church's first full time pastor. On November 7, 1947, the first services were held in the new church building.

The year 1977 brought an early catastrophe to the Church complex when it was severely damaged by fire, smoke and water. Restoration took place and was celebrated on April 9, 1978.

Christ Episcopal Church
Carroll and N. Beach Avenue

In 1889, Hettie Crowell held Sunday School services at her home on North Beach in Bay St. Louis. Regular services commenced at the "Elmwood Manor" home of the Leonhards. A grant of land was given to the Church Guild by the Widow Alexander Lamy at the corner of North Beach and Boardman Avenue. These meetings resulted in planting the corner stone to Christ Church the following year. The church was built with funds raised by various community activities. It was admitted as a mission in 1901 and in 1904, the church building was moved to its present site.

Christ Episcopal Church was consecrated on July 8, 1913 and expanded with a parish house and an educational annex. With the arrival of Reverend Charles Johnson in 1948, parish status was granted in 1950, and Christ Episcopal Day School was started. With the destruction of Hurricane Camille in 1969, Christ Church was totally demolished. A new Christ Church arose and dedicated to the glory of God on April 18, 1971.

Following 36 years of service, Rev. Johnson retired in 1984, followed by the second rector, Rev. Arthur Nick Johnson.

The Church is fronted by its Memorial Garden overlooking the Bay which was dedicated in 1987. It is a place for serene repose and is also used as a final rest for the ashes of cremated parishioners and their family members.

First Missionary Baptist Church
Sycamore and Third Streets

The First Missionary Baptist Church was organized in 1877 in the home of Deacon Alexander Fox. Its first regular pastor was Rev. Taylor Fryerson who led the congregants in building a church building on Kellar Street between Hancock and Third Streets.

The present site on Sycamore and Third was pressed for by Rev. Charles Mosley. Church growth prospered under the leadership of Reverend H.H. Lowe during his 26 years of service.

The church was destroyed by the Hurricane of 1947, and was rebuilt in April 1950 with Reverend S.T. Peters presiding for 15 years.

Churches of Bay St. Louis

Christ Episcopal Church
Carroll and N. Beach
Founded 1889

First Baptist Church
141 Main Street
Founded 1895
Present Building January 1950

First Missionary Baptist Church
Sycamore and Third Streets
Founded in 1877

First Presbyterian Church
138 deMontluzin Stret
Mission founded 1949

Main Street Methodist
Corner of Second and Main
Founded 1852

Our Lady of the Gulf Church
228 S. Beach Blvd
Founded 1847

St. Rose de Lima
301 S. Necaise Avenue
Mission founded in 1923

First Presbyterian Church
138 deMontluzin Street

Realizing a need for a local Presbyterian church was Mrs. Fred Koeniger and daughter Sybil and friends, Hilda and Barbara Sick. A gathering of the denominational faith occurred on December 13, 1949 to establish a mission. Regular religious services were pursued on second and fourth Sunday afternoons.

The first church was acquired in 1953, consisting of a renovated World War II Army barracks on deMontluzin Street. With faithful labor, a large room for church services, a Sunday school room, and a utility room was transformed from the old art studio that was there. In its first services on December 14, 1953, Rev. L.A. Beckman stated that the members had reached their "first milestone in establishing a place of worship for those of the Presbyterian faith."

On March 31, 1957, the Presbyterian Mission was reorganized as the First Presbyterian Church of Bay St. Louis as it gained full stature. In 1960, the "Drake Home" on Ulman Avenue was purchased and refurbished as the Pastor's manse.

On April 15, 1962 a new Church building was dedicated with service celebrations, and on June 10th, the Rev. Dwyn Mounger became Pastor. In 1970, the educational annex was completed. In 1987, Rev. Richard Jones became the new Pastor.

St. Augustine's Seminary

An historical landmark of Bay St. Louis is St. Augustine Seminary, which is home for the Divine Word Missionaries of the southern United States region and is an international Roman Catholic order representing 6000 missionary Priests and Brothers engaged in missionary work in 55 countries. St. Augustine opened at Bay St. Louis in 1923, as the first African American seminary to prepare missionary priesthood and brotherhood.

It has become the southern retirement headquarters for Divine Word Missionaries and offers a Retreat House for spiritual renewal. Inspired by the Lourdes grotto, Brother Paul Tanner, followed by Thaddeus Boucree, constructed the *Agony Grotto* and the Sacred Heart Shrine facing Highway 90. Other Religious and lay persons have contributed to the Grotto grounds as they are today.

Much of the material which forms the Grotto's facade and grandiose significance, came from broken concrete from portions of seawall destroyed by the 1947 Hurricane.

Revealing the life of Jesus Christ, on entering the tunnel and its dark passageway, illuminated by beams of daylight penetrating the cracks in the walls, the pilgrim experiences Christ's Agony in the Garden, His arrest, His Burial and His Resurrection. Although the gates are kept locked, a key is available at the Seminary Office and Gift Shop located behind the church. The flowering gardens, and lawns, and walkways provide a natural, pastoral and beautiful setting for the visitor.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S
SEMINARY
Founded 1920 in Greenville, Miss., by Divine Word Missionaries. Moved to Bay St. Louis 1923. Oldest existing Catholic seminary in Miss. for training of young men as missionary brothers & priests.

St. Augustine Seminary's first four Negro priests to be ordained were Rev. Maurice Rousseve, Rev. Vincent Smith, Rev. Anthony Bourges, and Rev. Francis Wade. They received holy Orders from Bishop Richard O. Gerow on May 23, 1934. The following day, all four celebrated their first Masses -- drawing hundreds of people from all sections of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama to witness the ceremonies.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
– Past Presidents –
1925 - H.S. Weston
1926 - H.S. Weston
1927 - H.S. Weston
1928 - C.C. McDonald, Sr.
1929 - George R. Rea
1930 - George R. Rea
1931 - Charles G. Moreau
1933 - Charles G. Moreau
1944 - Al E. Voight
1945 - Al E. Voight
1947 - Howard W. LeTessier
1948 - T.T. Robin
1949 - Hardin Shattuck
1950 - Howard W. LeTessier
1951 - A.H. Gregory
1952 - Octive Delph
1953 - Lambert Boyd
1954 - Alden Mauffray
1955 - C.C. McDonald, Jr.
1956 - C.C. McDonald, Jr.
1957 - Henry Osinach, Sr.
1958 - James C. DeBlanc
1959 - Hardin Shattuck
1960 - Ray Gordon
1961 - Ray Gordon
1962 - Warren Carver
1963 - Powell Glass
1964 - Joe Marochino
1965 - Joe Marochino
1966 - Wilson Webre
1967 - Wilson Webre
1968 - Ames Kergosien
1969 - Ruble Griffin
1970 - Ruble Griffin
1971 - Russell Chapman
1972 - Perry F. Gibson
1973 - E.J. Marengo
1974 - Nicholas M. Haas
1975 - Perry F. Gibson
1976 - Anita Lamb
1977 - P.D. Sonny Bailey
1978 - Dick Thomas
1979 - Dick Thomas
1980 - Wayne Ducomb, Jr.
1981 - Dick Kosbab
1982 - L.J. Breaux
1983 - L.J. Breaux
1984 - Pat Harville
1985 - John Mason
1986 - Dick Thomas
1987 - Herb Dubuisson
1988 - Rick Eagan
1989 - Randy Castello
1990 - Randy Castello
1991 - Basil Kennedy
1992 - Basil Kennedy
1993 - John Mason
1994 - David A. Treutal, Jr.
1995 - Ellis C. Cuevas
1996 - Scott B. Lemon
1997 - Dr. Frank Conaway

ORGANIZATIONS
Civic and Community

Hancock County Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce was chartered on November 4, 1925 adopting the name of Bay St. Louis Chamber of Commerce. The chartering officers were Joseph Mauffray, C.B. Fisher, and B.L. Ingram. Standing as its first President was H.S. Weston who was re-elected for two succeeding terms. Its name change took place on November 9, 1945 to the current Hancock County Chamber of Commerce.

Today the Chamber is an organized force of more than 350 business and professional men and women volunteers striving to make a difference in Hancock County. The Chamber is governed by a 20 member Board of Directors, fifteen of which are elected by the general membership for three year terms, and the remaining four are appointed by the President of the Board for one year.

As its Executive Director, Cindy Vernon, provides an impetus to meet the needs of the growing membership of the Chamber as Hancock County and Bay St. Louis develop in economic growth with industrial plants and new retail and service businesses.

Hancock County Tourism Development Bureau

Less than a year old, the Bureau is headed by Executive Director, Beth Carriere, who brings experience and quality to the task of promoting the County and Bay St. Louis. Recently launched was "*The Hunt*", which has as its major endeavor, to coax I-10 corridor travelers to encounter the major tourist attractions of the Stennis Space Center, the Diamondhead Resort, Buccaneer Park, the Casino Magic Complex, the Highway-90 corridor, and "*Old Town*" Bay St. Louis.

Hancock County Exchange Club

Chartered on April 13, 1985, its first president was Tommy Brooks. The club adopted the mission to promote patriotism and respect for Americanism and the Flag. This is demonstrated by the flags which are proudly displayed along Highway 90 and the downtown area on patriotic holidays. In 1988, the Club co-founded the South Mississippi Exchange Club's Family Child Center for prevention of child abuse. In May 1990, the first "Annual Fun Rais'n Auction" was instituted as its fundraising cornerstone.

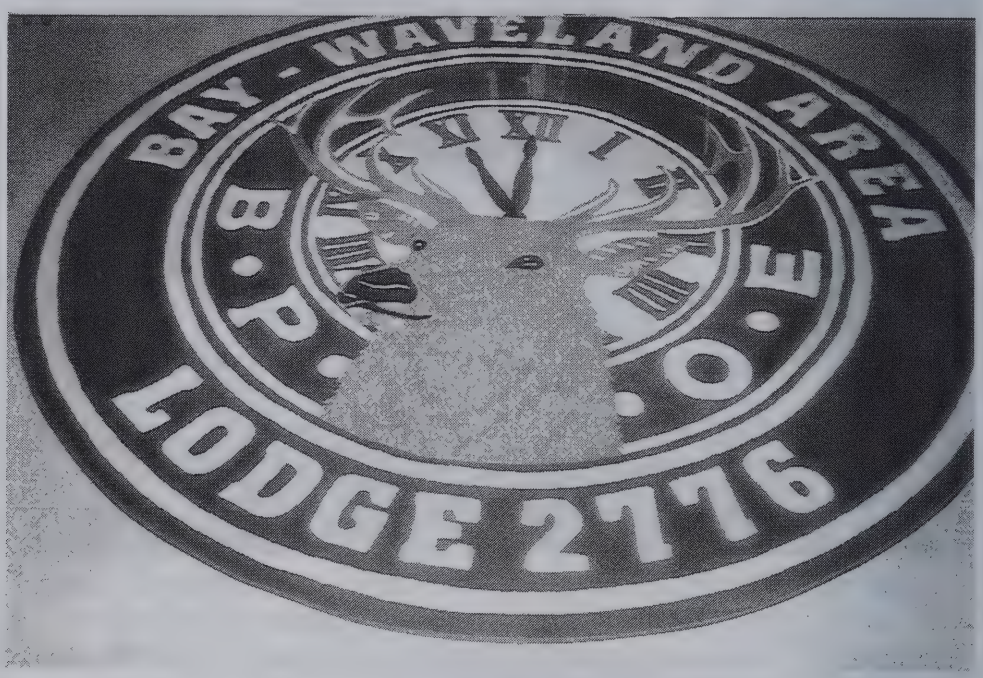
Exchange Club Past Presidents
1985 Tommy Brooks
1986 Michael Haas, Jr.
1987 Bob Hubbard
1987 Kelvin Schulz
1988 Rex Gilbert
1989 Bill Stechmann
1990 Gwen Meyers
1991 Julie Cannon
1992 Lisa Rodriguez
1993 Bob Hubbard
1994 Lynne DeRussy
1995 Barbie Haas
1996 Janell Nolan
1997 Sue Donnelly
1998 Joey Temples

Bay-Waveland Elks - Lodge #2776

Past Exalted Ruler, Donald Mauffray, stated, "For a long time we were fortunate to have free use of Member Phil Nami's First Precinct Restaurant on Beach Boulevard. But as our membership grew, we moved our functions to the DAV on Union St. In Nov. 1993, we rented the Antlers, Inc. building on Longfellow Drive and now we happily meet at the VFW Post #3253 on Third Street. The facilities are ideal for our rituals and socials, and in promoting our community services and the ever popular "***Hoop Shoot***" program."

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is one of the oldest and largest fraternal organizations in the United States having its commencement in New York City in 1868. The organization "seeks to draw into its circle only thoase who delight in wholesome associations with congenial companions and who share pratriotic loyalty and devotion. One of the missions of the Elks is to provide food and shelter for the homeless and service to those in need.

As its *Badge of Order*, the Elk was chosen because of the animal's attributes of fleetness, gracefulnes, gentleness, valiance, and its gregarious and majestic demeanor.



Hancock County Library System

A Library was dedicated to the public by the King's Daughters of Bay St. Louis on August 8, 1893. The library was allowed to use space made available at the new public school building.

The Kings Daughters Public Library later relocated to the Planchet building which burned down on November 16, 1907.

During its history, donations and fund raising was its only means of financial support in which many of the Bay residents participated.

The Hancock County Library System began in 1934 as a Works Progress Administration Project, more commonly called the WPA of the '30s. Miss Louise Crawford, as administrator, promoted a donation of 200 books and 2 rooms on the second floor of the Hancock Bank. By 1948, the library had grown by a much larger collection of books, which resulted in its move to the Knights of Columbus building on Main Street. Acquiring the Plunket home at 123 Court Street, the library became known as the City-County Memorial Library.

With a donation of $10,000 in 1965 and the need for a new building, the library and its books and assets were donated to the County and to the cities of Bay St. Louis and Waveland in order to be eligible for funding as a Public Library System. This occurred on June 20, 1966 which resulted in public funds being able for operations and continuance of quality service to the citizens. In 1967, property at Highway 90 and Ulman was purchased for a new building at its present location. In the mean time, while awaiting application approvals, a temporary move was made in 1969 to Dunbar and Ulman streets, where it remained until July 13, 1975, with the building completion at its present site.

With renovations and expansions, the present Library facility was officially opened in April 1995. The library offers current electronic computer data base access information and has branch operations in Waveland and at the Kiln in addition to a Book Mobile.

Hancock County Library System Employees are from left: Sandra Ladner, Mary Perkins, Gwen Taggart, Myra Haynes, Adrienne Bradley, Evelyn Necaise, Jeanne-Marie Bell, Donna Hutchings, Dawn Martin, Max Johnson, David Woodburn, Linda McKay, Marion Mc Auley, Sheila Cork, Cody Thomas, Prima Plauché, Jennifer Boatner, and Kathy Martinolich.

King's Daughters Emergency Hospital

Most good organizations have demonstrated their worthiness to the community by the devotion of its Volunteer members. A good membership to a worthy cause was exemplified by the King's Daughters in sponsoring and creating a needy community service to benefit all the residents.

In 1937, a group of ladies assembled to promote the establishment of an Emergency Hospital in order to perform the most good for Humanity.

In 1938, the Bay St. Louis Circle of King's Daughters and Sons was officially organized with a slate of founding officers: Mrs. A. F. Fournier, president, Mrs. Sarah A. Power, vice-president, and Mrs. W.L. Bourgeois and Mrs. G. Y. Blaize as secretaries. The initial mission was to provide help and charity to the poor, but in seeking a wider field for its activities, at the suggestion of its president, the Circle started an Emergency Hospital. Initially, the hospital was established on the upper story of Dr. D.H. Ward's residence, which he offered at no cost and the members donated refurbished furniture. This resulted in the hospital's first patient admittance on June 16, 1938. Within a short time, the hospital outgrew its first location and a house was rented on Main Street. Through aggressive promotions, a building fund was established to collect contributions to purchase a house at 128 Carroll Avenue. The initial payment was made September 8, 1941 and with its final payment, the King's Daughters Hospital was completely free of debt. Since its inception, the hospital had treated 4,121 patients --- to September.

Mardi Gras - On the Coast

The French term, Mardi Gras, means Fat Tuesday, referring to Shrove Tuesday of the Church calendar, which is the last day of feasting before forty days of fasting.

Mardi Gras Royalty of the 1890s
First Queen -- Julia Olivari
First King --- Walter Gex
Second King -- Robert Perre

However, Mardi Gras is a celebration older than Christianity itself. Its beginning goes back to nomadic shepherd tribes of ancient Greece when the villagers celebrated their Spring sacrificial festival by thanking their pagan gods for fertility of their land, their animals and their women. As this rustic custom was absorbed by the magnificent empires of Greece and Rome it was expanded and corrupted into a day of licentiousness and lust until it was finally tempered, tamed and timed by the early Christian Church as the last day of indulgence in

wine and food and revelry--the final farewell to flesh before the Lenten Season. It followed the Church throughout Europe and became one of the most eagerly awaited annual celebrations of Italy, France and even England.

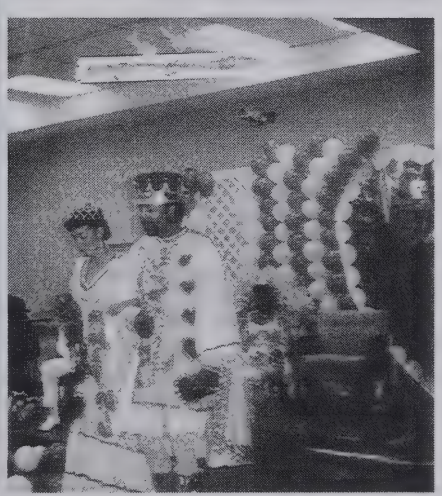
Mardi Gras in America was first celebrated in 1699 here on the Gulf Coast by d'Iberville and several companions who had left Old Biloxi (Ocean Springs) to find the Mississippi River. On Mardi Gras day, March 3rd, they rested themselves at a lonely bayou, after the first day's trip against the currents of the mighty river. They named it Bayou Mardi Gras and drank a toast of wine in the untested wilderness. That was the beginning of the annual observance of this ancient holiday, and the exploration of the Mississippi and the Gulf Coast by those founders who brought it to our shores. Mardi Gras has developed into one of the nation's most popular attractions.

Thousands of visitors, from all over the nation, converge on the coast cities from New Orleans to Mobile, including Biloxi, Gulfport, Long Beach, Pass Christian, Bay St. Louis, Waveland and Diamondhead. These visiting tourists join with local celebrants in the **Greatest Free Show In The South.** No admission is required. No conditions imposed, except that all guests are invited and expected to join the fun. Thousands of dollars and a year's effort is expended by the host cities in the preparation of costumes and floats for the fun-until-midnight parades and pageantry. On this, young and old participate in the revelry that stemmed from the old pagan rites.

Mrs. Reginald Blaize,(nee) Miss Julia Olivari was the first Queen of Mardi Gras in 1892 at Bay St. Louis, when she was Sweet-16.

Krewe of Real People

In 1982, a group of people got together and decided to commemorate their thankfulness and community gratitude by forming in celebration. They elected to display this tribute at Carnival Time by the formation of a club. The name denotes their warmth and excitement. **R**ealistic, **E**nergetic **A**mbitious, and **L**oving -- People. The Krewe of **REAL** People. Undergoing the years of struggle to continue underwriting the costly parades, which faced ever increasing costs, became their dedication and motivation to truly being Realistic, Energetic, Ambitious, and Loving. KORP, Krewe of Real People, extends their invitation not only to the huge crowds, which line the parade route, but to any organization who wishes to participate in their parade, by joining in the fun and revelry.



KORP not only has had the distinction of being the only Black Mardi Gras parading organization on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, but continues as the only Mardi Gras parade in Bay St. Louis.

OFFICERS
Connie Payne Lampley - Captain
Deirdre Bradley -- Co-Captain
Wesley Labat - President
Sharon Alexander - Secretary
Lonnie Bradley - Recorder
Dianne Frederick - Treasurer

Past Kings and Queens
1982 Leo Paul Garrett, Sr and
Queen Geraldine Watson
1983 Lonnie Bradley and
Queen Deirdre Bradley
1984 Leroy Lyons and
Queen Eartha Acker
1985 Calvin Smith and Queen,
Dianne Duvernay Fredrick
1986 Willie "Zeke" Bradley and
Queen Annie Bradley
1987 Byron Curry and
Queen Sharon Alexander
1988 William Washington and
Queen Charlene Hazeur-Cook
1989 Charles Johnson and
Queen Nellie Bell
1990 Arthur Conway and
Queen Paula Avery
1991 Pedro Williams and
Queen Williams
1992 Rickey Lyons and
Queen Sandra Lyons Price
1993 Gregory Lampley and
Queen Connie Payne Lampley
1994 Al Showers and
Queen Charlotte Fredrick
1995 Anthony Palmer and
Queen Felicia Craft Palmer
1996 Eric Labat and
Queen Katrina Labat
1997 Wesley Labat and
Queen Kimberly Bradley

YACHT CLUBS
Early Developments and Interests

The first Annual Regatta -- Martin's Wharf -- August 1891

Bay St. Louis residents who were also active in the Southern Yacht Club in New Orleans, organized the first recorded Regatta which was announced in *The Picayune* on August 1, 1891. "Ladies of New Orleans, Mobile as well as the belles of the Coast were adorned with flying colors . . . , after which followed champagne suppers on board the yachts and a grand ball at the hotel."

Waveland Regatta, July 15, 1893.

"Those who followed the orthodox seaside custom of rising at dawn and going about without even a cup of coffee until very late breakfast time, found that the morning gave promise of an intensely hot day. Long before 7 o'clock in the morning the sun was beating down upon the picturesque, pretty and very dusty road that borders the Waveland and Bay St. Louis coast, with a fierce fervor that was well nigh unbearable. There was a very light breeze off shore, which may have made life upon the yachts a trifle more tolerable, but ashore the temperature was discouragingly high before 7 o'clock, and by 8 it was well nigh unbearable. Yesterday a stiff breeze had sprung up during the forenoon, and from this circumstance the promoters of the Waveland Regatta were not at all discouraged when they saw the morning grow calm, bright and intensely hot during its early hours.

"Both Waveland and Bay St. Louis were early astir this morning, if, indeed they were not astir all night. There was a big garden party which was generally attended, and what with people returning from this and other evening entertainments, late arrivals trying to find the yachts to which they belonged, and yachts joining the anchored fleet off Nicholson Avenue, there was no little noise and "hubbub" all night. As often as a new yacht would arrive the others in the fleet would salute her with bombs and rockets, deafening reports and blinding flashes of brilliant colored lights making sleep anywhere along the coast practically impossible.

"The picture presented by the fleet was a dazzlingly beautiful one, some of the boats sending up fireworks looking like miniature volcanoes of vari-colored lights. After the saluting had ceased the early

visitors had begun to arrive, and then there was the clatter of wagons along the road and chattering upon every gallery as the newcomers talked about the incidents of their nocturnal journey just completed. Then the people who had charge of the refreshment booths, which were numerously distributed along the coast, began their preliminary work, and as the purple and orange and crimson of the liveliest days it had ever experienced. After dawn there was a dead calm, and then a light breeze from the land sprung up, tempering the intense heat for those aboard the yachts, while those ashore were fairly smothered with atmosphere and temperatures that were absolutely oppressive. As the forenoon wore on a freshening breeze sprang up and as the blue waters of the Gulf began to dance in sun-gilt ripples, the yachts were spreading their snowy sails and gliding about as restlessly and as gracefully as a flock of pigeons.

"The intense heat seemed to have been suddenly driven off away inland, and the atmosphere of the Gulf coast assumed that delightfully cool, fresh quality that has made the pretty villages scattered along the Mississippi Sound among the most desirable of seaside resorts, North and South. This has turned out to be in all respects a glorious day on the Gulf Coast. Never has such a regatta been seen in the South, and it has been seldom indeed that such a large and fashionable assembly has been brought for any social or sporting event anywhere in the Gulf States. Bay St. Louis and Waveland appear to be extremely popular this season at any time, but the promoters of the regatta can congratulate themselves upon having succeeded in having interesting and an unusually large number of people, not only from points along the Coast and New Orleans, but from comparatively remote portions of Mississippi, Texas, Alabama and Tennessee.

"Along fully four miles of beach this morning there were the liveliest pictures, painted in nature's brightest colors, and the idea of restful quiet supposed to pervade a seaside resort during the hot season seemed for the time at least hopelessly banished. It seemed as if everybody was keeping "open house" for the day, and from one and all of the beautiful homes overlooking the blue water of the Gulf hearty welcomes were being extended to visitors from all parts of the Gulf States. Everybody who had a home in Waveland or Bay St. Louis was entertaining visitors, and many of them must have had their houses considerably overcrowded. Hon. L. O'Donnell was one at whose house everybody had occasion to call, and if anyone appeared inclined to pass by he was apt to be halted by the hospitable master of "Arncliff" and urgently pressed to enter and make himself thoroughly at home.

Commodore Emile O'Brien (the first post-war Commodore of the Southern Yacht Club at New Orleans who negotiated the building of its first clubhouse in 1878) was another who would not let an acquaintance pass unheeded, and his cordial invitation was always warmly seconded by the Commodore's venerable mother, an ideal lady of the good old school. Mr. John Fell, at Rose Hill, well up the Waveland coast, commanding a view of the Sound's shore all the way to Pass Christian, was with his daughters, son and daughter-in-law, entertaining numbers of visitors who strolled through the splendid orchard, fed the fish in the well-stocked fish pond (where the occupants were so tame that they would eat out of one's hand), and then enjoyed the delightful sea breeze from the broad gallery which surrounds an ideal seaside home.

These, however, were only some of the entertainers of the thousands of visitors which flocked to the Gulf coast yesterday and to-day. Every one had visitors, whether they happened to be old friends or comparative strangers, and it is safe to say that everybody who visited Waveland, or Bay St. Louis yesterday or to-day, must have felt himself singularly at home from the moment he landed. From every point of view there were beautiful pictures. Close at hand the yachting fleet lay, with their white sails flapping lazily in the fresh and breeze, while at intervals, as if chafing at the slow dragging of the morning hours, some half-dozen would quit their moorings and go darting in and out among the boats at anchor like so many white-winged sea gulls. From the deck of any yacht in the fleet, looking shoreward, the picture was not less inviting. Far across the shoaling, broad beach, the limpid tide looked like a dancing amber flood, as it spread only a thin, flashing film over the bright yellow sand, and this stretched up to the rich green shard which, overlapping the abrupt bank, reached down to meet it. Then came a narrow, winding ribbon of white shellroad, along which glittering carriages were rolling lazily in the sunshine, and beyond this, behind snowy palings, the lovely seaside homes were half-hiding their red roofs and white walls in leafy bowers of richest verdure, enlivened and enriched with spangles of roses, magnolias, oleanders, and crepe-myrtles.

As the hour for the firing of the first signal gun approached, the scene became more and more animated. Thousands flocked to the beach, some taking up position in schooners anchored near the stake boat, others rowing about in skiffs, while many more, and by far the greatest number, filled the piers and summer houses along the shore. Among so many thousands of spectators as found places in one or the other of these positions from which to view the race, anything like a

complete list would be, of course, out of the question.

"The course was a triangular one, staking seven and a half miles for each turn, the start and finish stake boat, which was a large schooner anchored off Nicholson Avenue. With a commendable promptness worthy of all imitation, everything was in readiness in accordance with the published announcement, and the "*first gun*" was fired promptly at noon with the whole fleet entered for the event lying with sails set just west of the starting line."

Yacht Club - To be located at Waveland, Mississippi.

The *Times-Democrat* stated July 1893, that "The annual regatta which took place at Waveland a few days ago, and proved so successful and enjoyable, has been the subject of discussion among yachtsmen ever since, and that discussion has culminated in a scheme that will be hailed with delight by all interested in yachting along the coast. The matter has been taken in charge by prominent yachtsmen in the city, and is a movement to organize a club in Waveland, build a handsome clubhouse, and give, besides their regular annual regatta, like affairs during the year. The idea has met with a ready response from all the people of Waveland, and those who are in the habit of visiting there during the summer, to say nothing of the many people of New Orleans who are interested in yachting. The popularity of the Waveland course is demonstrated annually by the large number of entries in the races, nearly every point along the coast being represented in the regatta. The interest in the regatta, too, is shown by the thousands who attend the event every year. At the last regatta, several days ago, the seashore was lined with people, the windows and doors of the houses along the coast were crowded with eager spectators, and in the waters of the sound were hundreds of boats, occupied by persons who had come to witness the race. Each year sees the interest in these regattas increase, and the gentlemen who have the matter of erecting a clubhouse in charge have come to the conclusion that the interest demands it."

Gulf Coast Southern Yacht Club - August 4, 1893

At the regular monthly meeting of the board of mayor and aldermen at Waveland, last night, the following important resolution was introduced and unanimously carried by the board;

"That the privilege be granted to the Gulf Coast Southern Yacht Club to build in front of Nicholson or Coleman avenue a building with the necessary adjuncts for a clubhouse, said privilege to be granted for 99 years and the club be exempt from any corporation taxes. Of course, enough members must subscribe before anything definite can be done. The shares will be $25 each for full membership in the club. Therefore, two hundred shares will make $5000, the said amount being amply sufficient to give a fine building with all the needed equipment. Several attempts have been made heretofore to organize a club, each time the enterprise has fallen through, but on this occasion there are those at the head who are not used to failures, and whose progressive ideas are so well known that the spirit is catching and will enthuse all listening to the arguments in favor of the club.

"The two gentlemen getting this matter before the board are sure of success, and declare that they will work until it is an assured fact. The object of the club is not only to give annual regattas, but to have a fine band of music, with a concert at least once or twice a week, with grand balls etc. In fact, the rules of the Southern Yacht Club, of New Orleans, will be adopted with amendments to make it even more attractive.

"One of the gentlemen agitating this question has just returned from a long trip and he was in Canada during last week's Great Regatta, and says the people of Waveland and the Bay have no idea how extensively these regattas advertise this section, and of how much interest is taken in them all over the United States. It is thought every property holder at Waveland will subscribe, which will at once bring forward the desired amount and will also be the means of raising the value of real estate on account of the inducements for summer pleasures."

The Bay-Waveland Yacht Club - 1898

"In 1898, the Bay-Waveland Club obtained a charter and provided to build a clubhouse located out in the water of the Mississippi Sound, near the center of the town of Bay St. Louis at the foot of Washington Street, which was connected to the shore by an 1100-foot wharf," as reported by Flora K Scheib's *History of the Southern Yacht Club. "It was the handsomest equipped and prettiest of club houses in the South,"* stated *The Picayune.*

BWYC Commodores
1898 - Louis J. Leonard
1902 - E.J. Bowers
1903 - J.V. Dunbar
1904 - John A. Rawlins
1922 - Earnest J. Leonard
1949 - John Bell
- Henry B. Chapman
1957 - Leo Seal, Jr.
1970 - Larry Larroux

Bay-Waveland Yacht Club. *(Sea Coast Echo, Sept. 5, 1903, pg 6)*

"The Bay-Waveland Yacht Club is already looking forward to the celebration of its Seventh Annual Regatta. Ever since the erection of the Club House, and the inauguration of these regattas the succeeding years have shown a decided increase in the interest among the members of the organization, in addition to showing a gratified increase in the membership. Bay-Waveland Yacht Clubhouse located out in the water near the center of the town of Bay St. Louis is one of the handsomest equipped and prettiest of club houses in the South; it reflects great credit upon the old time members, who were instrumental in its erection. This seasons regatta promises to be a greater success than ever; larger crowds are expected and the indications are that a greater number of boats will be entered in the various classes. The officers of the club are: Hon. E. J. Bowers, Commodore; L. H. Fairchild, Vice-Commodore; J. B. Dunbar, Rear Commodore; E.J. O'Brien, Secretary; Richard Mendes, Treasurer; John A. Rawlins, Fleet Captain and Dr. R. J. Turner, Fleet Surgeon. The regatta committee is composed of T. J. Lanaux and E. L. Pinac."

Officers of 1904:
J.A. Rawlins, Commodore;
L.H. Fairchild, Vice-Com;
J.B. Dunbar, Rear Comm;
E.E. O'Brien, Sec;
Richard Mendes, Treas;
W.J. Chapman, First Capt;
Dr. R.J. Turner, Fleet Surgeon.
Regatta Committee:
E.L. Pinac, W.W. Boulement and E.J. O'Brien;
Official Measurer: Gilbert Marshall
(The Sea Coast Echo, Illustrated magazine section, Sept 5, 1903, compiled by Edward E. Marks; Chas G. Moreau, Proprietor.)

Bay Waveland Yacht Club

During interviews with several residents, including Emile "Larry" Larroux, and taking excerpts from Flora K. Sheib's *Southern Yacht Club*, the following information was accessed.

By 1901, the club membership approached its limit of 600 and had spent $10,000 on its clubhouse with funds available to improve the anchorage and mooring pen. However, with the hurricane of 1915, all was destroyed, causing the club membership to temporarily dissolve. In 1921, with renewed interest, the Keller's brick building at 600 S. Beach was purchased for a clubhouse. The new club was called the Bay-Waveland Yacht and Athletic Club with Louis J. Leonard being elected president by an enthusiastic group consisting of Bernard Shields, John K. Edwards, Clem Penrose, Edward Schwartz, John Osoinach, Charles G. Moreau, George J. Toca, Charles A. Breath, George Rea, R.R. Perkins, Walter J. Gex, Sr., and Messrs Spoorl and Zemurray.

The new club's first Regatta was held in 1922 and their name was offered once more to the Gulf Yachting Association. As the years approached the *Great Depression*, once more the club dwindled.

Sailing regatta's were revived and held at Blaize's Wharf when Bull Blaize was Mayor during the late 1930s and early '40s. However, with World War II, activity stopped once more until after the 1947 Hurricane when John Bell pulled together the remaining few members and re-organized the Yacht Club at its present site on the former George Borgsted lands.

With the expiration of the Club's original 50-year charter in 1948, John Bell called a revitalized group to meet on February 21, 1949. The group consisting of John Bell, Charles Breath, Ed Brignac, N.L. Carter, Lucien Gex, John McDonald, Leo Seal, E.N. Spence and J.J. Kelleher, were able to raise pledge commitments of $40,000. At a meeting on March 19, 1949, 139 enthusiastic participants elected John Bell as Commodore of the new organization which was first called Yacht Clubs, Inc. and soon afterwards changed to Bay-Waveland Yacht Club.

Acquisition of the canning factory site at North Beach and North Second Street with 180-foot of beachfront was concluded, and inspite of the 1949 storm, the construction of the new clubhouse was completed with grand-opening ceremonies held on December 31, 1949.

John Bell and his wife, Mary, inspired the Bay St. Louis community to start the Little Theater as well as the Bay-Waveland Yacht Club.

Cannon Balls

It was stated about the Bells that one morning in 1947, Mary Bell awakened her husband John, enjoining him to "go see who's making all the noise outside -- it sounds like somebody is breaking down the front door!" When John looked out, he realized that a Hurricane was surrounding them. Thereafter, the residents called her Mary *"Cannon Ball"*.

The 1983 Sir Thomas Lipton Regatta was held at **BWYC** with a record breaking attendance of 21 Gulf Yachting Association yachtclubs participating from the 25-club member organization. The **BWYC** won the *Lipton Regatta* for the 9th time while approximately 1000 spectators looked on to the more than 100 boats fleeting across the Bay of St. Louis.

The Ladies Auxiliary was activated in 1954 under the leadership of Mrs. Charles Lozano. Throughout the past decades, the Auxiliary has offered many novice amenities and sporting social events.

During the year of 1997, the **Bay-Waveland Yacht Club** celebrated its Centennial ceremonies in dedication to Southern yachting and sportsmanship.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

Preservation and Restoration

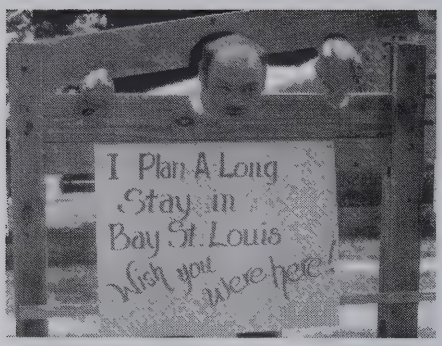
Hancock County citizens are proud of their original heritage. Although a great number of residents from the two municipalities of Bay St. Louis and Waveland, and the Diamondhead-Piney Woods settlements, and the Pearl River area were not born in Hancock County, nor Mississippi, they enjoy the heritage into which they have made a selection to live. Many newcomers eagerly seek out information of historical consequence pertaining to their adopted Gulf Coast community and environs.

It is a fact that much of early documentation has been mostly undisclosed due to the changes of governing nations during the 1700s. In later years, conflagrations and hurricanes caused additional records to be destroyed. However, there are those who care enough to collect and restore the past, and also, those who graphically reproduce current events and the natural habitat for future generations. Some of these on film, and some on canvass, or on concrete walls in the form of murals. Local governing officials are very supportive in restoration and preservation projects. Of consequence is the current emphasis in drafting ordinances in Bay St. Louis for an Historic Preservation Commission.

Statue of King Louis IX -- *namesake for St. Louis Bay and the city.*
The Italian marble statue stands above the grave of a descendant from Rigny, France at Holly Bluff Gardens Cemetery amidst 3700 Acres off Hwy 90 North of the Kiln Road. *(Photo Courtesy - Bob Hubbard)*

There are many citizens who have maintained their own private collections of photographs and memorabilia. As these collections are passed down to future generations, some are lost to be rendered useless to family members who no longer live in the area. Fortunately, responsive persons have found that the re-energized Hancock County Historical Society is a dependable archival depository for storing and displaying these treasures from the past.

The Centennial



Mayor Eddie Favre recently hitched himself to the stocks in promoting his re-election.

The Ladies Below were dressed for the antibellum period.

The first week of August 1958 was set aside by "Bay St. Louisans" to celebrate and show off their city in welcoming guests and tourists. The townsfolk were celebrating their 100th year of incorporation -- albeit 40 years too late. The town historians were off a bit. They were not aware that Bay St. Louis, or rather, Shieldsborough, had firstly been incorporated in 1818 and again in 1838. Nevertheless, and needless to say, everyone had a grand time. Men grew beards for fear of being shackled in the "stocks", and women sewed gowns and tailored period clothes for the re-enactments which would tell their history and heritage.

Every night of that week, a cast of 250 stout-hearted citizens, donned their historically authentic regalia and participated in a 90-minute pageantry and then took to the streets to promenade until the late hours.

Throughout the town, displays of antique cars, wagons, books, coins and other memorabilia prevailed. Their were day-time parades of floats, horses, sheriff's posses, and military bands. In the afternoons, the Centennial Belles conducted teas and old-fashioned style shows.

The week was highlighted with a Coronation Ball where Jackie Taillac Noto was crowned Queen and the finale was touched off by a tonsorial beard-cutting contest that was won by John Rutherford.

A Renaissance of Renovation *and Restoration*

The Bay St. Louis train depot presented an opportunity for preservation of an historic transportation facility. The depot building and site had become a major symbol and a challenge for development and renovation. potential for Hancock County's and the Bay City's history, culture.

The Passenger terminal at left was built by the L&N Railroad in 1928, replacing the original depot of the 1870s. Since major renovations, *"The Depot"* is used for many Community events.

The depot project brought together teams of human resources and community support in desiring to emphasize its history and culture.

The current depot was originally built in 1928 for use as a passenger terminal by the L & N Railroad. However, with discontinued passenger service in the early 1960s, the building was abandoned to use as a storage facility by the Railroad company. This resulted in the Spanish Colonial Revival-style building undergoing three decades of neglect. Actually, the very first depot at this site had been built sometime during the 1870s or 1880s.

Through the efforts of Mayor Eddie Favre and the City Council, the CSX Railroad company donated the present depot building and sold the 5-acre site to the City. This was followed by the City effecting planning and landscaping grants and a commitment for funding in order to restore and embellish the depot building.

The City's "Main Street" downtown redevelopment program, through the Bay St. Louis Development Foundation, established the guidelines for its restoration and utilization.

In 1995, Mayor Eddie Favre acclaimed that, "The renovation of the Depot is the crown jewel in our City's overall redevelopment scenario. The Depot epitomizes the social and economic traditions which shaped the character of the City and our people."

Bay ST. Louis Development Foundation
Board of Directors
John R. Adams
Susan Chamberlain
Irwin Cucullu
Charles Gray
S. Patrick Murphy, Jr.
Yancy Pogue
Michal Reeves, AIA
Charles "Dusty" Rhodes
John A. Scafide, Jr.
Ruth Thompson
Donna Tingstrom
Michael R. Cuevas, Manager

HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Kate Lobrano House

This former residence was constructed from the boards of which river barges were made. Upon completing a downriver journey, the barges were disassembled and put to new uses -- in this case the Kate Lobrano House at Cue Street next to the County Court House. The house was built in 1896 of board and baton walls which are still in excellent condition. In 1988, the house was given to the Historical Society with the proviso that its owner, Kate Maynard Lobrano, be identified with her forebears as to its historical significance.

The ***Lobrano House*** is home to all the activity of the Hancock County Historical Society, and as needed, the Victorian cottage has expanded to accommodate a donated vault as well as a museum room.

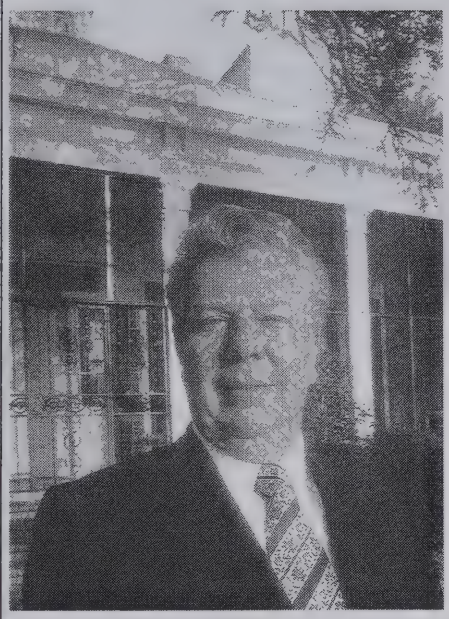
In 1987, a spirited group of citizens gathered over coffee and mustered the idea to reorganize the Historical Society which ceased to exist. One of the first projects pursued was to have the Mississippi Department of Archives and History provide an historical marker. This was realized at Beach Avenue and Ulman Street to commemorate the 1814 Naval Battle of the Bay of St. Louis. Leading the ceremonies for that occasion was the Society's president, Dr. Bill Bradford, and prior president Peggy Gibbens.

Presidents,
Hancock County Historical Society
1975 - Norton Haas
1976 - Norton Haas
1977 - Lionel Baxter
1977 - Captain Max Berns
1978 - Louis Fernandez
1979 - Louis Fernandez
1980 - Peggy Gibbens
1981 - Peggy Gibbens
1982 - Irene Hile
1984 - Ward Bueckler
1985 - Peggy Gibbens
1986 - William Bradford
1987 - William Bradford
1988 - Chales Gray
1989 - Chales Gray
1990 - Dr. Lawrence Heller
1991 - Dr. Lawrence Heller
1992 - Ruth Thompson
1993 - Ruth Thompson
1994 - Charles Gray
1995 - Charles Gray
1996 - Charles Gray
1997 - Charles Gray

The vitality didn't stop there, the originators infected the whole community, not only of Bay St. Louis, but eventually throughout the entire County. Through years of fund-raisers and promotions, the Kate Lobrano House has become the nerve center for capturing data on computers assisted by a dedicated cadre of volunteers. Every conceivable article or book about Hancock County's past residents, events, and organizations; even including all past issues of the Sea Coast Echo since 1892, have been converted to digital form and is now available "on-line" through web-interface to the whole world.

The headquarters thrives with busy excitement. The Society and its nearly 500 members have generated a massive collection of Indian artifacts, heritage collections, photographs, archival documents and maps, genealogical data, and research references which are paramount to its successful organization. On May 23, 1996, a dedication lunch celebrated the home's expansion for needed space and its garden of antique roses. Members are treated to a large meeting hall complete with a stage and dressing room and a fully equipped kitchen, which provides lunches for its membership meetings and special occasions.

The Society's success in due in great part to Charles Gray, who has an unrelenting drive and a manner filled with effervescence and effectiveness. Anyone off the street who meanders into the Kate Lobrano House is graciously treated to a humorous and educational encounter with the heritage of Bay St. Louis. A masterful and magnanimous host, Charles Gray provides the newcomer with handouts and suggestions and a request to sign the guest Register. He is not only the President of the Hancock County Historical Society for the past several years, but also the publisher of "The HISTORIAN", a monthly historical information and news bulletin which reaches its wide membership to keep them posted and participating.



Charles Gray

As Director and Curator for the elaborate base of operations, Karen Flores has put her Degree in Architectural History to furthering the Society's many functions. On-going projects consist of computer enhanced photographic reproductions of archaic structures, which are no longer in existence, as well as the majestic historic cottages that line the beaches of Bay St. Louis and Waveland. The graphic displays also include historic landmarks, several old plantation homes, log cabins and piney woods dwellings which were once abundant. Karen Flores also creates nostalgic "note card sets", a "Cook Book" and other promotions as fund raising benefits for the Society.

Jerry Heitzmann

Jerry Heitzmann
Genealogist/Author

Some questions go begging to be asked, and one which is usually prompted to a person who dabbles in history or genealogy is, "How did you get started? Jerry explains it this way. "My Wedding Book was absolutely blank with no background heritage contributions to leave our children. My wife, a Favre descendant, had many undiscovered heritage roots to follow. So, I thought that I best start with discovery on the Heitzmann side. Grandmother Pauline had all the answers in addition to many stories early Bay St. Louis. After her death, I continued my interest and found out that my grandmother's dad was a Croatian from Yugoslavia."

"However, on my wife's side, it got awfully complicated!"

Jerry explained that his original course of discovery was to methodically plod through a myriad of Favres by a process of elimination. Following a nine year effort, he realized that he had a genealogists nightmare of accumulated data. During the preceding years, he had collaborated with Nap Cassibry, both in retrieving information from him and by independent research, contributing material to Cassibry. "We traded data with one another, as Nap was assembling his genealogy on the Ladners, I was gathering the Favre and Farve heritage."

Heitzmann stated that in 1988, he took a one-week vacation, locked himself in a room and did a rough draft for his final published work. "Nap Cassibry typed my manuscript as he had done with his *Ladner Odyssey*, and I donated my print-ready draft to the Biloxi Historical Society for publication and distribution under my name."

Heitzmann has been a banker with Hancock Bank since January 1984, and during relief moments, he has collected corrections and additions to the *Favre History* for several years. He intends to produce a 2nd Edition after his retirement.

However, he is undeterred in his on-going passion to collect military artifacts, uniforms, relics, and light ordinance weaponry from American campaigns of war. He proudly displays his "War Museum", which is ensconced in several rooms and in the attic of his home.

Kenneth F. Murphy
Documentary Editorial Photographer

It has frequently been said, that "a picture is worth a thousand words"! True, but even more true when historic events and ordinary people, places and things are assimilated by the experienced and critical eye of a Photographic Documenter.

Coast magazine, periodicals, journals and many commercial flyers have distinguished their covers and pages with the photographic artwork produced and captured by Ken Murphy.

Having spent eight years in the armed services, Ken developed his unique admiration for the beauty created both by nature and by human handiwork. In 1983, he pursued his love for photography by taking formal training at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Since 1986, he has been both a Freelance Photographer as well as having been employed by C.F. Weber Photography and Coast Magazine Corporation. Preferring the freedom of being an entrepreneur, he has launched his Freelance photographer's skills into establishing a studio and gallery where he will anchor his services and his photographic productions. His products will run the gamut -- from his famous portraits and scenic illustrations -- to include a black and white photo lab and digitally-captured CD-ROM art-scenarios.

His client list is long with many major corporate and institutional entities in the Deep South. Some of the publications which credit his photographic genius are: *Coast Magazine, Mississippi Magazine, Go Magazine, Sierra , Arrive, Louisiana Life, International, American Forest, ARETE, Voyager, and 55 & Fine* magazines. Book publications include: *48 Hours, Profiles in Progress, Readers Digest*, and several others including this commemorative History of Bay St. Louis.

Even his list of awards, ribbons, and plaques can decorate a whole wall. Hancock Bank has portrayed his famous scenic tableaus in their annual pastoral Calendars since 1990.

Ken is proud of his work and has an acute eye for perfection. Having taken thousands of "shots" along the coasts of Mississippi and Louisiana, he has shared some of these here in portraying the beautiful communities of Hancock County.

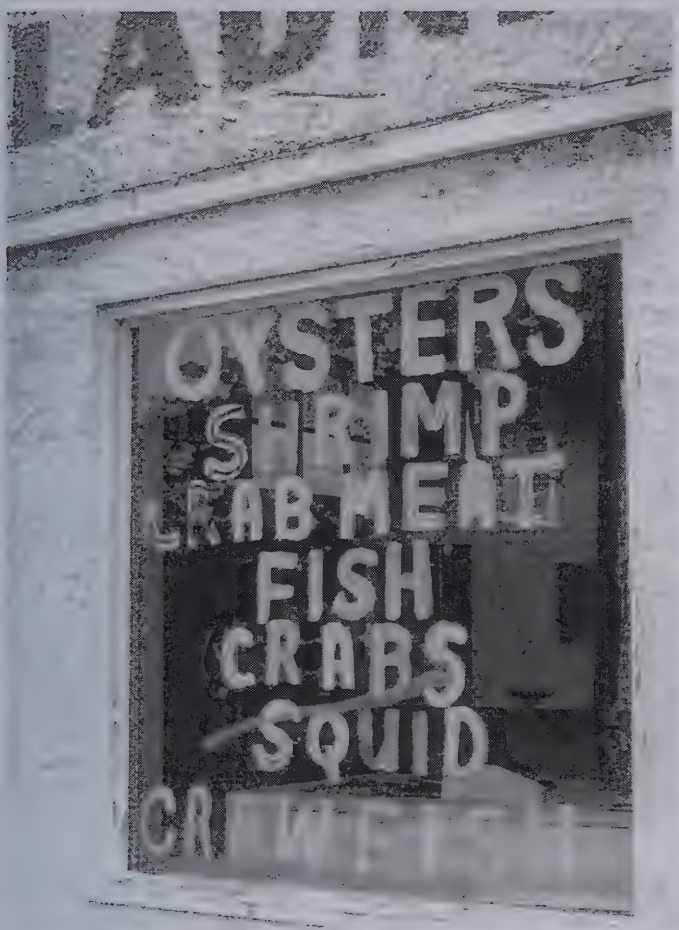
Of his work, Ken says, "I'm just gettin' started!"

STUDIO SOUTH II
Ken Murphy- Commercial Photographer
109 S. Beach Boulevard (228) 467-5995

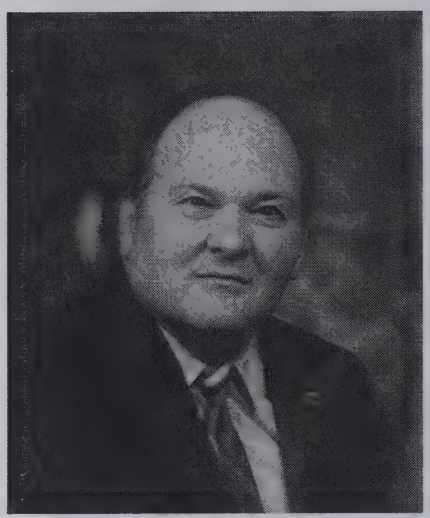
- It's knowing the little things that make a big difference in capturing your image.
- It's possessing a passion for the craft that results in excellence, rather than mediocrity.
- It's recognizing the strengths of this locale through the appreciative eyes of a true Southerner.
- It's **Studio South II** -- seasoned in the ***Business of IMAGE.***

Courtesy of Ken Murphy

Courtesy of Ken Murphy



Robert G. Hubbard
Photographer Journalist



Bob Hubbard

Bob Hubbard is a native of Waveland and a graduate from the University of Southern Mississippi. In affiliation with the NASA project, Bob prepared technical and publicity photo documents pertaining to the vast devastation rendered by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

In 1984, he took his photographic talents international by displaying his video and photo artworks at the New Orleans World's Fair.

Active in many organizations, he has photographed many of the special events and landmark scenery throughout the Waveland and Bay St. Louis area.

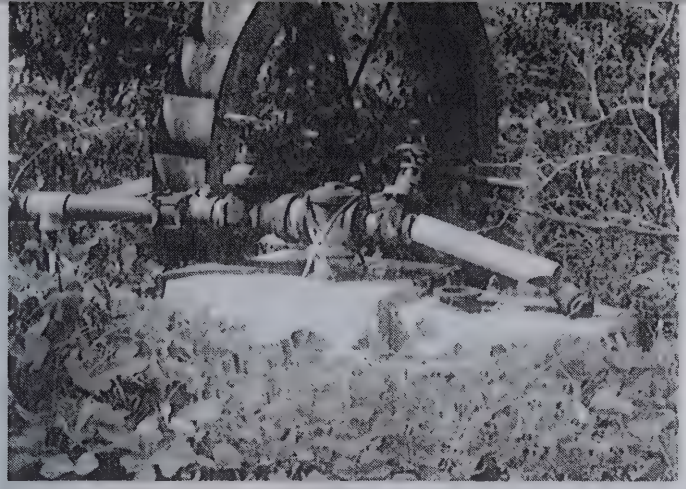
As an enthusiastic engine, Bob's drive, attitude, and charisma has been known throughout all of Hancock County. Having served as an Alderman for 12 years for the City of Waveland, he is also challenged by the many, good community service organizations. He is a past president of the Exchange Club and a past Director of the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce. He actively supports many of the civic organizations in Hancock and is the Treasurer for Save Our Children, a United Way agency.

Having graduated from St. Stanislaus in 1957, he went on to study for the priesthood at St. Joseph Seminary in Covington for two years. As a member of Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church, he is also participates as a visiting Eucharistic Minister.

Pure and pious, Bob Hubbard has also taught in the Hancock County School System, at Hancock North Central, Bay Highschool, and Gulfview Middle School.

Bob Hubbard has bestowed a number of photographs upon his community, some of which are included as photo representative documents in augmenting this Tricentennial history presentation of Hancock County and its several communities.

At his home/studio, Bob, has tediously categorized thousands of photographic pictorials of people, places, and things. He has studiously maintained albums of the culture and scenery of the marshlands, woodlands, and waterways throughout the hidden, myriad nooks and crannies of Hancock County.



Courtesy of Bob Hubbard

HISTORY OF THE SEA COAST ECHO

by Ellis C. Cuevas, Editor and Publisher, *The Sea Coast Echo*

The *Sea Coast Echo's* lengthy Hancock County history began with its first publication on January 9, 1892, in Bay St. Louis.

During its more than 100 years of operation, The *Sea Coast Echo* only missed two publication dates. The first issue missed was in 1918, as the publisher's daughter and the linotype operator both succumbed to a plague. The second deadline missed was due to Hurricane Camille in August 1969.

The First *Echo* publisher was Charles G. Moreau, and the newspaper was owned by Moreau and W. L. May, who was leasing the neighboring *Pass Christian Coast Beacon.* W.L. May shortly thereafter, sold his interest to A.G. Osoinach, a city editor of the *Gulfport Daily Herald*, who in 1897, sold his interests to Moreau.

The first newspaper plant was located on the beach side of Front Street (Beach Boulevard), having its own electric generator to power the presses.

The first editions of the *Echo* were usually a four page format with inside pages covering local news and advertising, and the front and back pages contained national news and advertising. The American Flag logo was on the front page.

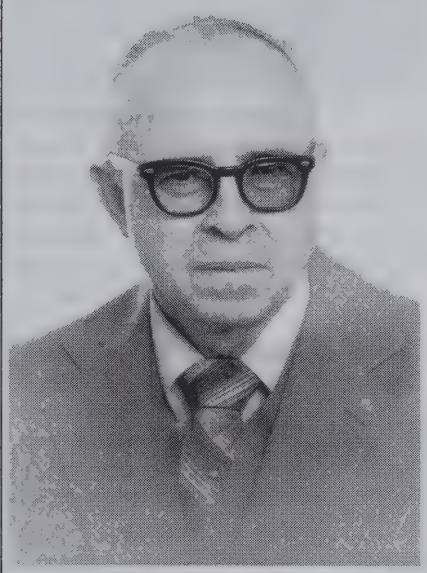
The first advertiser was George Planchet, Bay St. Louis dry goods store owner.

The first subscribers of the *Echo* were: Mrs. Madeline Breath, wife of the late Judge John A. Breath; Louis J. Piernas, black postmaster of Bay St. Louis; and John Caldwell of Bay St. Louis and Ashville, North Carolina.

The *Sea Coast Echo* was among the first to publish a school edition, called the "*St. Stanislaus Echoes*", in 1900.

In 1903, the Echo moved to the corner of Beach Boulevard and State Street in a two-story building, where it remained until 1956, relocating to the old Woodman of the World Building, 112 S. Second Street. The *Echo* moved to its current location at 124 Court Street in 1979.

The Golden Anniversary publication of the *Echo* was being printed for 1942, when owner/publisher Moreau died in November 1941.



Ellis C. Cuevas
Editor and Publisher
The Sea Coast Echo

The *Echo* was purchased by A.G. (Red) Favre, Hancock County Chancery and Circuit Clerk. The paper was operated by him and his family until sold to Stan Opotowski in 1952.

The *Echo* published once a week until going twice weekly in October 1975, with Thursday/Sunday publication days.

In 1955, Opotowski sold the paper to Bay St. Louis Attorney, Dan M. Russell, United States District Court Judge.

Then, in 1956, the *Echo* was sold to Samuel L. Ballard, who converted the paper to offset press production, installing a model Harris S-7L, which printed four pages at a time. This upgrade enabled the *Sea Coast Echo* to be among the first Mississippi newspapers changing to the offset method of printing.

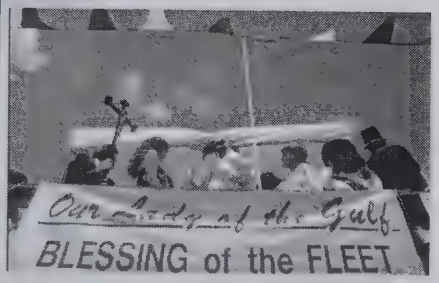
In 1958, the *Echo* was then sold to Milton I. Stewart and Harold E. Dohm of Minnesota operating for a 3-month period, and they, in turn, sold to Powell Glass, Jr. of Lynchburg, Virginia.

In 1968, the *Echo* was then purchased from Glass by James D. Lancaster of Alabama with Ben Smith as co-owner, who later sold his interest to Lancaster, the current owner of the Sea Coast Echo and Bay St. Louis Newspapers, Inc.

Edward Hall was the Editor and Publisher from 1968-1976, followed by Larry Nash from 1976 to 1977, and then followed by Ellis C. Cuevas, who is also Executive Vice-president of *Bay St. Louis Newspapers, Inc.*

HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS IN HANCOCK COUNTY

1846, January 17, The *Gainesville Advocate*
1866, The *Gainesville Star*
1868, The *Bay St. Louis Gazette*, Frank Heiderhoff.
1872, The *Bay St. Louis Republican*, Frank Heiderhoff.
1876, March 16, *Bay St. Louis Herald*, Daniel B. Seal.
1880, The *Sea Coast Gazette*, E.P. Odom.
1883, The *Bay St. Louis Republican*, Col. Ben Lane Posey who operated it until selling it to E.J. Bowers.
1887, Name change to *Gulf Coast Progress*, by A.R. Hart who purchased the Bay St. Louis Repbulican, closed in 1929.
1892, January 9, The *Sea Coast Echo*, Charles G. Moreau.
1895, April, the *Sea Coast Echo* published the first "SHOPPER".
1897, The *Pearlington Herald*, published by the *Sea Coast Echo*, edited by Sam J. Gray. The paper shut down when the Poitevant-Favre Lumber Company closed.
1949, September, The *Hancock County Eagle*, was started by a former employee of the *Sea Coast Echo*, John Damborino, who later sold it to Powell Glass, Jr., then owner of the *Sea Coast Echo*, who merged ownership of both papers.
1940s-1950s, *The Light*, published by Mrs. Jeanette Carmichael who wrote scathing editorials on most issues of the day.
1959, December 9, The *Waveland Advocate*, published by the *Sea Coast Echo*, with Polly Mazarakis as Associate Editor, closed February 14, 1961.



Festive Events Abound

Bay St. Louis provides many occasions and festivals for its citizenry. This includes something for all the holiday seasons, in addition to which are special Saturday shopping days in Old Town and Dancing at the Depot to live music.

Blessings of the Fleet are traditional annual ceremonies which originated by the coast's fishermen. Each year the boats are dressed out and parade before the priests for their blessings. "Death is a sobering thought and the fishermen who face life-threatening situations want to believe a higher authority will intervene. The blessing cements their faith. They are reminded that the sea is so big, and the fisher's boat is so small."

Crab Festivals are filled with fun, food and music. Competition also extends to the agile crabs. Spectators root for their favorite clawed contestant during a crab race. The first crustacean to reach the edge of the table is declared the winner.

WAVELAND

Proposed Public Pier
for the Beach Waterfront

Waveland
Tri-Centennial

Land of the Waves and Hospitality

The City of Waveland, nicknamed the *Hospitality City*, was incorporated on March 6, 1888. The "Land of the Waves" has been a long established summer retreat and resort for visitors from New Orleans and Natchez. Both of those communities had an early influence on the mode of living for the Waveland residents. Even in supporting it as the birthplace of the coast's first all-women Mardi Gras Krewe and that it stages the coast's oldest St. Patrick's Day Parade.

An early observer noted that "life in Waveland is simple -- gravitating lazily around swimming, fishing and houseparties. Immediately after Labor Day the people return to New Orleans with the certainty and precision of a regiment breaking camp".

The natural beauty of the residential town on the waters of the Mississippi Sound make it an ideal place for children to grow up.

Today, Waveland has a population of approximately 6500.

Census Reportings:
The 1920 census population was 431
The 1930 census population was 663
The 1960 census population was 1,106
The 1970 census population was 3,108
The 1990 census population was 5,269

Early Developments

Historically, Waveland was once a part of old Shieldsboro and was approached by water with the schooners which landed there. When it was pronounced a separate municipality in 1888, Alfred A. Ulman became its first Mayor, followed by Paul Conrad and later, L.H. Fairchild. The town hall was built in 1893 on land donated by Jesse P. Coleman. During its formative periods it was also called *Grand Bend* and with the introduction of the railroad, it was also known as *Montgomery Station.*

In 1872, Brown's Vineyard was established by Fred W.Brown of Germany and the area became famous for its champagnes and scuppernong wine. A beautiful orchard and colony of alligators added a special ambience to the oldest and largest vineyard on the Coast. It was located in the vicinity of present day Lil' Ray's Restaurant on Highway 90. Scuppernong champagne was sold throughout the South and to the north in the cities of Chicago and New York. Reportedly, the demand was for its medicinal values.

In the early 1900s, Brown's son, Albert promoted it as a vineyard get-away. Carriages and tallyhos conveyed guests to the dining facilities which offered a special cuisine with non-alcohol selections of scuppernong citrus wines. Dancing was available in the pavilion with live music. Weekend hayrides to the pavilion were popular and professional chaperons were hired for the younger set as they made the five-mile trip from Bay St. Louis. A crowd of merry-makers would often hire a tallyho from Frank Taconi's for the price of five dollars.

The first post office was established in October 1875 with Joseph Carrio as the Postmaster. The major business in the 1880s was the Ulman Woolen Mill located on Nicholson Avenue which produced woolen blankets and black and white plaid shawls. Special living quarters were built on Jeff Davis Avenue as tenement housing for the mill workers.

The New Orleans, Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad (later, the L & N Railroad) was started early in 1869 and completed 20 months later in October 1870. It covered from Mobile to New Orleans. The 139-mile route crossed six major water bodies. In the city of Waveland, there were two stops, one at Waveland Avenue and the other, three miles further, at Nicholson Avenue (Ulmansville). Montgomery Station was an early name for the city of Waveland.

MAYORS OF WAVELAND

1st	Alfred A. Ulman	1888 to 1890
2nd	Paul Conrad	1890 to 1893
3rd	L.H. Fairchild	1893 to 1896
4th	Edwin Laizer	1896 to 1902
5th	Olus M. Bourgeois	1902 to 1906
6th	Thomas J. Bourgeois	1906 to 1916
7th	George Herlilhy	1916 to 1930
8th	Edward Schwartz	1930 to 1933
9th	W. A. Mapp	1933 to 1934
10th	Thomas J. Bourgeois	1939 to 1942
11th	Garfield J. Ladner	1942 to 1974
12th	John T. Longo, Jr.	1974 to 1990
13th	Stella Frilot	1990 to 1994
14th	John C. Mason	1994, present

During the early periods of the 1870s, the journey to Waveland, aboard the Louisville and Nashville railroad, was regarded as a very pleasant trip. From New Orleans, boarding the cars at the foot of Canal street, the train crossed the last drainage canal in a few minutes run, and the great city was left behind, with its thin line of masts that marked the crest of the Mississippi, and at once it plunged into a typical Louisiana forest. Before the cypress trunks and black stagnant pools became monotonous to the eye, the swift train rushed into the flat marshlands that lay between New Orleans and the Rigolets. The visions that were caught within the frame of the car window were like a panoramic series of landscapes. After a two-hour run, Waveland was reached. Montgomery Station was located in the midst of a brown stretch of pine scenery, three-quarters of a mile behind the town, with long white roads extending fan-wise to the coast. During most seasons of the year, thirty or more private carriages were drawn up around the station every Sunday morning to await the arrival of the early trains.

By 1915, sixteen trains, including excursions, were making daily runs to and from New Orleans. Passenger accommodations included dining and chair cars with necessary screening to restrict the marsh insects.

Nicholson Avenue Depot
When passengers needed to board a train, they would simply flag it down at some appropriate location, which in time became known as an official Flag Stop. As a community developed, the local citizenry would build a hut or a small building to protect themselves from the weather. These eventually became official Railroad Depots where tickets were sold and freight baggage and shipments handled.

In the 1890s,
the *Waveland Store* on St. Joseph Street, was owned by Louis Bourgeois, who also, with his brother, established a store in Bay St. Louis. W. L. Bourgeois operated the business at 616 N. Beach across from the Hancock Bank. The brothers facilitated their business growth by shipping along the L&N rail route from Lake Shore to Mississippi City. One of their products was fresh Fox River Creamery Butter, which they delivered daily.

The Waveland of the 1890s is best described in the following words. "Waveland, what a pretty name it is; how inviting it sounds -- but not prettier nor more inviting than the water-side resort to which it belongs. This is strictly the place of homes. Neither shops nor hotels disturb the domestic tranquility of this beautiful place, bordered on one side by the sea and on the other by bright and cheerful residences. Here and there a slender wedge of forest slips furtively down to the sea, but these lapses into a primeval condition are most infrequent, and already Waveland has begun to grow inward. *(Daily Picayune - July 24, 1892)*

Another fitting description was drafted by a staff correspondent of the *Times Democrat* on May 4, 1893.

"Waveland is forty-eight miles from New Orleans, on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, and is the nearest of that series of summer resorts that lie scattered along the coast from Lake Borgne nearly to the beginning of Mobile Bay. All of these Gulf towns are nothing more or less than outlying suburbs of the Crescent City, and nearly a fourth of the intelligent and fashionable people of New Orleans spend their summers in them. And Waveland, more than any other, deserves the title of suburb, for all but two or three of its hundred cottages are occupied by business men of New Orleans, who spend the entire summer here with their families, only coming into the city once or twice a week, or sometimes making daily trips, to attend to their business affairs. Waveland consists of but a winding shellroad along the beach and one row of houses bordering that, and behind the one row of houses but green pine woods. Waveland does not pretend to be a country town. It has no stores and scarcely any native inhabitants. It is simply a residence portion of New Orleans, which only needs rapid transit on the part of the railroad and frequent trains to develop it into a place of some magnitude, and to make it even more popular than it is now."

Every cottage, however small, has its bathhouse in front of it, and as the waters are shallow, long, spindle-legged wharves are run out to gain a sufficient depth. These wharves are of many lengths, and present the appearance of an irregular fringe hung along the beach. The sweep of the shore is a pure, wide crescent, and Pass Christian may be faintly seen on this taut purple headland which tapers into a hazy thread, and is lost between the ocean and the sky."

The shell covered Front Road began at the *Jackson House* at the western edge of Waveland and continued eastward along the shoreline to form with the Bay St. Louis, a beautiful roadway of some nine miles long. Along this road were vine-covered, white cottages

dotting the coastline at irregular intervals. In front of the houses was the shadow-swept expanse of the Mississippi sound, whitened here and there by a glittering sail.

In 1895, Charles Dyer stated in *Along the Coast,* that Waveland was solely a residence place. One general merchandise store was owned by J.B. Ulman, whose father started the Ulman woolen mill. In addition to the Ulman grocery, was that of Fortune O. Kroll, Sr., who positioned his grocery at the Waveland train depot. The Louis S. Bourgeois general store was established in 1870 at the corner of Jeff Davis and Coleman Avenues. Herlihy and Haas had one of the largest and best stocked mercantile establishments on Coleman avenue. Also, E.N. Haas and his brother, S.J. Haas, operated a sawmill at Lake Shore.

Years of Prosperity

Waveland was first established as an exclusive community where those who lived there were well acquainted with each other, consisting of a tight knit circle of friends. Some of the most expensive residences and most elaborate grounds and homesteads were to be found at Waveland following the period after the Civil War. Those who resided in the summer cottages kept their estates in immaculate condition during the winters, while many Orleanians lived there year around. They arrived every evening and left every morning by train. Very few strangers visited Waveland except as guests of those who owned their residences.

Early mansions belonged to John Felt, L.H. Fairchild, Peter Hellwege, George Nicholson, E.N. Haas, T.H. Herlihy, Paul Conrad, George Sears, John Forester, and H.J. Martinez whose acreage abounded in pecan groves and apple orchards.

Credit for the promotion of Waveland into a resort has been given to an early pioneering visionary named Peter Hellwege. Not content with his exquisite home in New Orleans, he sought new worlds to conquer, a new field for the display of his taste and energy, and found them on the sleepy coast of Waveland. He induced his friends to buy property and to build homes around him. Hellwege built "*Oak Den*", a residence comparable to his majestic city home on St. Charles Avenue.

Louisiana Congressman H. Dudley Coleman owned a summer home on the beach for almost fifty years. Loving the community, he donated land for the much needed public school, which was built in

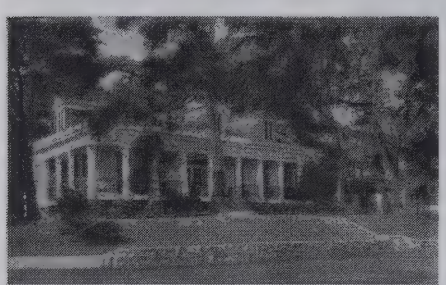
Typical Cottages
The four-mile shell covered Front Road that coursed along Waveland's seashore to Bay St. Louis was dotted with cottages. Above was the house of E.N. Haas and below, the Herlihy residence.

1893, at a cost $800. C. Bordage was hired as its Teacher-Principle for the sixty-five beginning students. Coleman Avenue was named for the Congressman.

The Old Pirate House

There are many traditions and legends surrounding Waveland, many of which originated in the early 1800's. For instance, the "Old Pirate House," which was built in 1802, has generated many tales due to the mystery surrounding its building and owner. Since its early years the house has passed through many hands and one story unfolds that the mansion was once the plantation home of a New Orleans business man who was overlord of a band of coast pirates who gave aid to Andrew Jackson in the defense of New Orleans. He is credited with organizing the pirate band which was composed of such colorful characters as Pierre and Jean Lafitte. Some accounts say the house actually belonged to Lafitte. A tunnel ran from the water's edge to the house's basement, which some believed doubled as a holding place for "black ivory" or illegally smuggled slaves.

The Waveland Pirate House was maintained in the true symbol of "Piracy". On one of its doors was affixed the traditional skull and cross-bones hanging below a crucifix.



The Pirate House had many stories about blood stained walls, unexplained moans, screams and ghostly apparitions had long been a part of the Pirate House mystique. One owner, after turning off the living room light and starting up the staircase, stopped and screamed. Standing at the top of the stairs was a death-like image of a man whose stare was almost hypnotic. When she moved towards him, he vanished into nothingness. This 1930s incident was one of many occurrences at the large, elegant home on Waveland's beachfront road.

Another of the earliest legends of the site, tells of a deep well in the back-yard that became the early graves of three men who had been thrown, alive into its depths. That very afternoon, the ghost of one of them, wearing shirt-sleeves, returned to walk across the yard. He continued to stroll the grounds on many occasions afterwards. In the mid 1930s, new owners bought the house. A family photograph was snapped of everyone standing on the front gallery steps. When it was developed, an image of a man in shirt-sleeves could be seen at the window of an upstairs room.

Later owners liked to think of the old house as not being haunted, but inhabited by "visitants". Then came Hurricane Camille, a 1969 storm that tore the legendary house apart like match sticks. Thousands of bricks were left strewn about the area, including the doors and grillwork. Still favoring the location, the owners collected all

of the reusable debris and constructed a much smaller cottage 50 feet to the rear of the original house. Apparently the ghosts were not recycled.

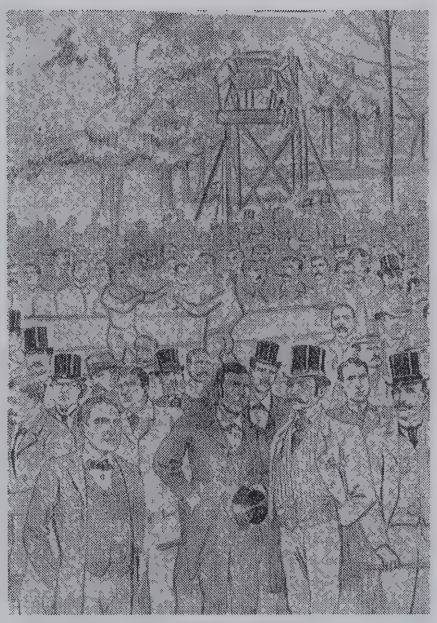
The Art of Boxing

During the early 1890s, boxing promoter and trainer, Professor James Robertson had set up a pugilistic training school in Waveland where he brought famous boxers to work out during the fall and winter months.

These training quarters provided a great attraction for week-end entertainment. Many visitors, both young and older men, arrived from Bay St. Louis and New Orleans. Some were drafted from the audience to spar with the guest fighters in training.

Such notables as Joe Fielding, the English lightweight, worked out in November of 1892 in anticipation of taking on the winner of the Bowen-Eckert bout at Plaquemines. Paddy Ryan, defeated at Mississippi City (Gulfport) in February 1892 by John L. Sullivan, also trained at Professor Robertson's training quarters.

Local laws, however, prohibited *Robertson's Institute for Physical Culture*. This resulted in his eventually closing down a very thriving enterprise.



The First Official Knockout took place in Mississippi City at the Barne's Hotel on February 7, 1882. Sullivan at 23 years, weighed 177 pounds and Ryan, 29, weighed in at 188. The bare-fisted match ended with the first official knockout in the 87th round of battle. Prizefighting was illegal then.

Early 1900s

In January 1913, the Bay St. Louis Ice, Light and Bottling Works contracted to light the streets in Waveland. The Nicholson Avenue Theater opened in 1921. Mr. William Surgi opened a show in Waveland in 1925. The Waveland Drug Store opened in June 1929 with C.K. Herlihy as manager and druggist. The Waveland Baseball team of 1931 was called the "*Sentinels*" and in 1932 the name was changed to "*Green Sox.*" Mr. Ed Ortte operated "*The Gulf*" cinema in June of 1937. The municipal pier was built at the head of Coleman Avenue in April 1945. *Coney Island of the South* operated 15 riding devices at 10 cents a ride at Jackson Ridge in June 1950.

A beautiful Christmas tradition became established on two of the downtown streets. Lafitte Street transforms into *Christmas Door Lane* and Molere Street becomes *Christmas Card Lane*. The lighting and decorations welcomes all passersby to a unique Yuletide scenery, in which, each neighborhood competes with the other.

St. Clare's Church

During the period of 1847 to 1860, the Catholic mission of St. Clare at Waveland was first administered by Father Stanislaus Buteux who was headquartered at Bay St. Louis. There afterward, by Father LeDuc. Emile Carriere, then president of the Citizen's Bank in New Orleans donated $1000, which allowed Father LeDuc to build a church in 1881. Bishop Janssens blessed the new bell and dedicated the church on July 15, 1883. By 1898, church services were held every Sunday by visiting priests from Bay St. Louis.

Waveland became an official Catholic parish on July 1, 1919, with Father M.J. Costello as its first pastor. The church grounds doubled in size by 1905, with a rectory and church renovations. Father Costello also tended to the missions at Clermont Harbor, Lakeshore, Ansley and Logtown.

The first formal training classes in Waveland were performed by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Bourg. On Sunday, January 7, 1855, the Sisters arrived at Bay St. Louis where they were installed for housing. Needless to say, the expected schoolrooms at Bay St. Louis had not been constructed. It was resolved that they would start classes at Waveland. The French nuns traveled daily by foot, even during inclement weather, trekking the five miles back and forth. A narrow lane running through the woods and crossing snake infested marsh areas, was the only road. Classes were held in the mission church building at Waveland until April of 1855. The anticipated girls' school at Bay St. Louis was finally opened the following September with 33 students.

City Government

The City Hall is now housed in a former elementary school, which was built in 1906 by builder Ferd Raymond. The person in charge of Public Works is Marilyn Smith, who was raised just next door to the Hall. Having served with the City for 21 years she quips that the back yard to the Hall was a stock yard where stray cattle and horses were impounded. "In fact, my office was a former Barber shop and my desk is where Chris Ladner use to have his barber chair. Marilyn, a youthful lady, explains that, "Some of the new young people regard me as older than I am -- that's because my first husband, Kenneth Fayard, was the City Fire Chief for so long and because I have always made myself useful to the City's needs."

City services and utilities are up-to-date and the city has a recently installed sewerage system, newly surfaced streets, and modern fire fighting equipment and vehicles for fire departments and police The city's recreation department provides an attractive, completely fenced-in, tree-shaded municipal park equipped with tennis courts, softball field, basketball courts, playground equipment, and picnic shelter, and there is a rip rap fishing jetty in addition to a second playground at the water's edge.

The City of Waveland has been growing rapidly during the past five years at a rate unprecedented in its long history. Once mainly a summer resort, today the town is alive with activity and taking on a bright new face as construction and new business rejuvenates this coastal village into a renewed and viable community.

In a perspective balance, Waveland has prudently restricted its beach front for residential use only, which uniquely makes it the only city on Mississippi's Gulf Coast without commercial intrusion.

Waveland has maintained a continuous panorama of lovely homes and gardens, which line the entire length of the beach drive. Waveland is one of the few cities in the nation to consistently make claim to this traditional distinction.

The newest public elementary school in the two city area is in Waveland. There is also St. Clare's parochial elementary school and the Hancock County Library System maintains a Waveland Branch.

As a Twin City with Bay St Louis, there is much sharing in community, service, social events, and including facilities such as: Bay Waveland Yacht Club, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Exchange Club, Garden Club, Senior Citizens Center, American Legion, AARP, RSVP, etc.

CITY OF
WAVELAND
HOSPITALITY CITY

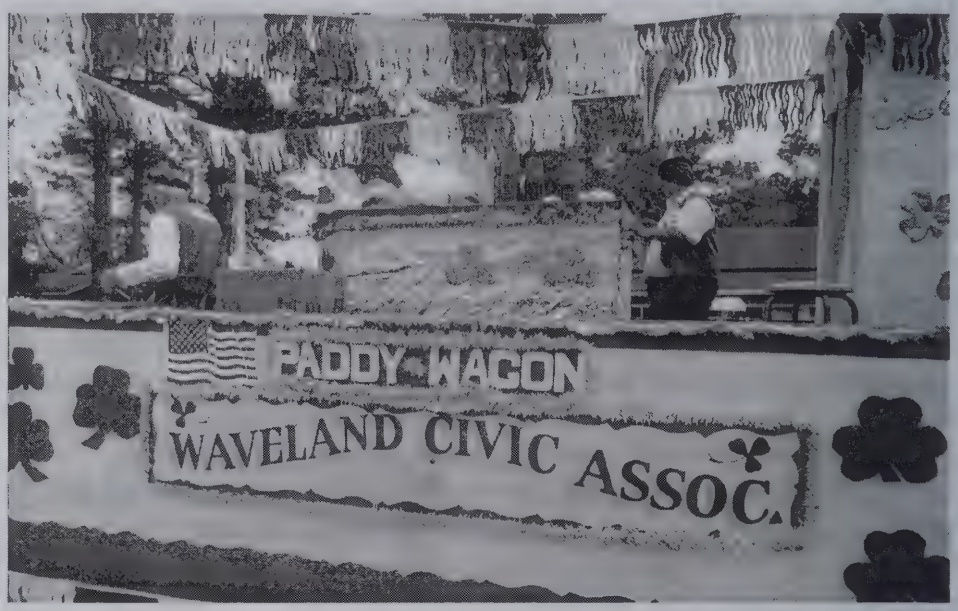
The Community

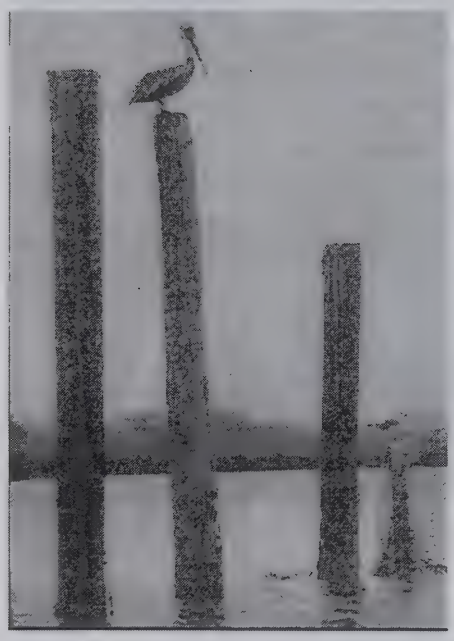
Three shopping centers are represented by large chain stores as well as local retail and service merchants and professionals. The Waveland Shopping Center opened with seventeen stores in October 1974, and the recent K-Mart Center opened in 1995.

Churches of several denominations welcome residents to worship while many community activities are held at the American Legion Hall and at St. Clare's Parish Hall.

For public entertainment, there are two parade clubs. Each organization contributes meaningfully to community traditions with the annual St. Patrick's Day and Mardi Gras parades.

The Waveland Civic Association was started by a group of men who chartered themselves in 1976 and sponsors the annual St.Patrick's Day parade, which originated in 1964.





The Krewe of Nereids was nurtured by a group of ladies in 1966. The carnival spirit is heightened by the colorful floats which predominate this coastal and festive day parade.

Camille was no Lady

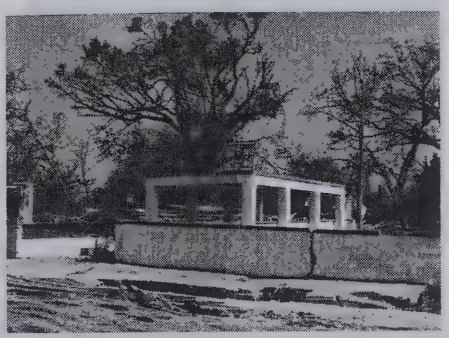
August 17th is a special civic holiday for prayer and thanksgiving to remember Camille in 1969. Ninety percent of the six miles of beach front homes were destroyed leaving a city without drinking water, gas, phones, or electricity.

The devastation of Camille was reported nationally as the worst Hurricane that ever invaded the North American continent. The Mississippi Gulf Coast was ravaged into disbelief. Huge ships were left high and dry on the shore; fishing boats and pleasure boats blocked streets and highways or sat on private property rammed part way into private homes. Keepsakes and treasured heirlooms handed down for generations were forever lost.

A beautiful and memorable way of life was changed overnight into a nightmare of desolation, need, and utter despair.

Hurricane Camille
For those who survived, a marker of gratitude was dedicated in May 1972 to the citizens who refused to abandon their city and for the aid supplied by government agencies, organizations, churches and individuals. This Historic Marker is located in the front of City Hall at 301 Coleman Avenue.

Steps to Nowhere !



A Place of Beauty --

Mrs. Mississippi -- 1997-1998
Ronnie Bueche

As a newcomer to Mississippi, and now hailing from Waveland, **Ronnie Bueche** qualified along with 14 contestants at Jackson as Mrs. Hancock County. There, she competed for the state crown in swimsuit, evening gown, and interview categories. In one of her interview questions she expressed the need "to have Christian values of friendship within the family, and always to keep lines of communication open." This is how Ronnie became **Mrs. Mississippi** for 1997-98. She then competed in the Mrs. America pageant held in Las Vegas in September of 1997 where she became First Alternate.

Originating from Louisiana, Ronnie first entered pageants when she was eleven. At 13, she won *Miss Louisiana-Hemisphere* and competed in New Jersey in the Miss Hemisphere National Pageant. With many years of active dancing, Ronnie was the choreographer for her Highschool Dance Team and was one of the *Golden Girls* at LSU for 3 years. In 1992, she graduated with a Batchelor Degree in Nursing from Southeastern Louisiana University with honors.

At 29-years, Ronnie is married to husband, Mark Bueche, for 5 years, during which time he has represented her as trainer, manager, and promoter. Both, remain active church participants at the First Assembly of God Church in Waveland.

During a '96 summer vacation in Florida, on a whim and urging from her husband, Ronnie won the *Panama Jack* Bikini Contest. Ronnie easily captured the title and won generous prizes and billboard exposure throughout Florida.

Ronnie stated that, "pageants are hard work", and "it takes discipline", but she enjoys the competition which allows her to meet so many other competing women who are interesting and come from varied walks of life. "It's been a once in a lifetime opportunity for me," states the beauty Queen.

Beautiful, lithesome, poised, confident, intelligent and unabashed, Ronnie has been a registered nurse at Hancock Medical Center since February 1996. Completing the commitments for her remaining title tenure as **Mrs. Mississippi**, she now seeks new horizons in the field of Modeling.

Happy Smiles from Ronnie Bueche

Lakeshore

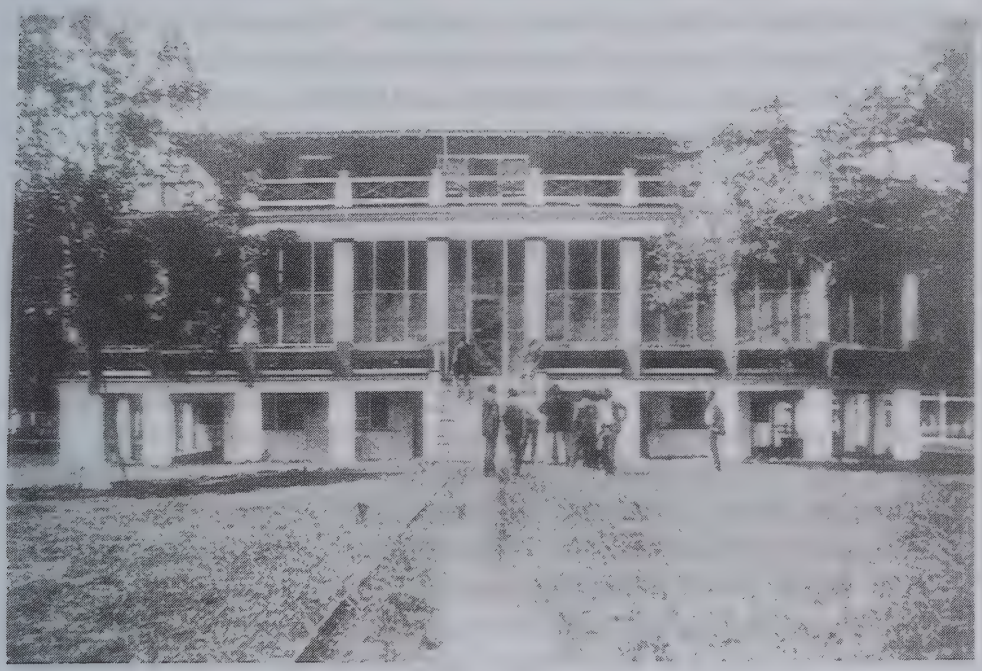
Buccaneer Park

Along Beach Drive between Lake Shore and Waveland is Buccaneer State Park, which had its grand opening in March 1976. This beautiful park affords many activities, including: camping, picnicking, swimming, fishing and the Wave Pool and Water Slide. This is one of the nicest of Mississippi's State Parks and has become one of the state's leading recreational preserve because of its excellent coastline location. The 400-acre Park includes a mile-long beach front.

The design includes camping areas, swimming pools, tennis courts, basketball court, shuffleboard court, reception building, activities building, three bath houses, two picnic pavilions with rest rooms, one comfort station, maintenance building, playground, and a manager's residence.

Gulfside Assembly

The Jackson House



Gulfside Assembly
The Gulfside Chautauqua and Camp Meeting Ground was made a reality on April 16, 1923.

The house of a nephew of Andrew Jackson flanked the extreme west of Waveland with the white shellroad beginning at its front and continuing eastward following the sweep of the coast, in and out, for nearly four miles until joining at Bay St. Louis. Not unlike other great mansions throughout the South, the Jackson House went into a period of neglect and deterioration until the vast estate was acquired.

The following are reflections of **Gulfside Assembly** as remembered by C. Gilbert, whose father was a native of Waveland.

"Certain places will forever haunt the memories of African Americans. Magic places that came alive with an energy born of our indomitable spirits. Power places that we nurtured through seemingly insurmountable odds. Sacred places where we experience the laughter and tears of the Black soul. Such a place is Gulfside Assembly in Waveland, Mississippi. My first experience with Gulfside was as a child. A picnic ground on the beach. A golden place by the sea, land of seagulls, warm white sands, ice-cold watermelon, softball, shallow water, and the sun. Only place on the Gulf Coast where a black toe could touch the white sands."

"In the beginning, northern as well as southern whites allowed Blacks to hear Jesus' words within the same building -- but only in the galleries. Black ministers did not have full autonomy over their congregations and could never hope to move up through the church hierarchy.

"Until the dawn of the Civil War, the issue of slavery was never really confronted within the church structure. Slavery was tolerated as much within the church as it was in the community at large.

"There were no Black bishops until 1920 -- and there was a division drawn along racial lines. In fact, in the late 1880s, four Black students were turned away from University of Chattanooga, a Methodist Episcopal college. Gulfside Assembly evolved directly from the needs of Black Methodists. By 1923, Blacks had been forced into their separate conferences. Ultimately, White Methodists wanted as little social contact with Black Methodists as possible. The Methodist Church was truly a mirror of American society as it existed then. Jim Crow was alive and well. In 1939, Jim Crow was formalized. Since their split over slavery in 1844, Whites from North and South, had been pushing for unification in the Methodist kingdom. The stumbling block was the Black Methodist. Where would they put him? So they legitimized what already existed. They formed the Central Jurisdiction, where all of the Black Methodist conferences were lumped."

"When the Northern and Southern Methodists reunited in 1920, Rev. Robert E. Jones became one of the first Blacks to be elevated to the office of bishop. While Bishop Jones was speaking at a White Methodist campground, he got the idea for Gulfside. The campgrounds were situated on a lake in Ohio. Why not have a campground, meeting place for Black Methodists in their own District, which encompassed West Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. At that time, Waveland, Mississippi was centrally located on the Gulf Coast just 55 miles from New Orleans. Bishop Jones raised approximately $4,000 to purchase land through the aid of churches and individuals. With this money he bought 300 acres and leased another 316 acres. How could a Black man purchase beach front property in Mississippi during the heyday of Jim Crow? Simple -- Bishop Jones was very fair skinned and the sellers mistook him for white. There was only one building on the whole of the 616 acres. It was called the *Jackson House* because it supposedly had been the home of President Andrew Jackson. It was a magnificent old mansion with very large rooms."

"Bishop Jones marshalled his force of 14 preachers, and local craftsmen who set about putting the deteriorating structure back into living condition. The men also built a screened-in pavilion around the

dirt floor where meetings were held. The immediate grounds were cleaned and a tennis court etched out also."

"There existed a poor excuse for a dirt road leading to the Jackson House area. When it rained, there literally was no road, so most people walked the three miles through the woods to the Jackson House. Those first two decades under the leadership of Bishop Jones saw Gulfside blossom into not only a pivotal point for the New Orleans area, but also for the Region as well. In the early days, events at Gulfside took place during the summer months."

"Bishop Jones' tenure at Gulfside, spanned the Great Depression years and was speckled with threats of foreclosure. But Gulfside always managed to meet its payments. Pennies were collected, philanthropists courted, and lots were sold from the 300 acres."

"There was also the prejudice of the times. My father, who was from Waveland, volunteered often at Gulfside. He told me of cross burnings on several occasions. Many whites were angered by Black folks' "defiling" the Jackson House. One winter morning in 1935 it mysteriously caught fire. A hurricane in 1947, finished the Jackson House and other buildings that were built on the purchased land."

"By 1944, Bishop Robert N. Brooks had become Administrator of Gulfside. Under his leadership, Gulfside Assembly continued to be the focal point for training, youth retreats, jurisdictional meetings, and leadership training activities."

"In September, 1931, over three thousand people attended the Gulfside Song Fest to hear a chorus of over 500 voices. It should also be noted that during the civil rights movement, Gulfside served as a meeting place for the region. Civil rights activist, Hollis Watkins of Jackson, Mississippi, said "there were only three places where Blacks could meet in Mississippi during the movement, Toogaloo College, Rusk College, and Gulfside."

"In 1968, Black Methodists were finally accepted on an equal footing by White Methodists, which resulted in disbanding the all Black Central Jurisdiction and the Black membership was interspersed among existing White conferences."

"As a result, interest in Gulfside Assembly dwindled, and there was talk of selling Gulfside and dividing the proceeds among the 12 Black Methodist Episcopal colleges. But those efforts were laid to rest by persistent visionaries; Bishop Mack B. Stokes, Bishop Ernest T. Dixon and layman, Wayne Calbert. These three worked tirelessly to preserve what they thought was a Black treasure."

Gulfside Assembly, by C. Gilbert.

Breaking with Tradition

Another tradition was broken when Mrs. Molly Stewart became the first lay person and the first woman to be elected President of the Gulfside Assembly Board of Directors.

The fruits of labor can be seen in the renovated, modern complex that exists today because of the courageous and unrelenting efforts of Bishop Ernest T. Dixon, who was President of the Board of Directors for 14 years.

Administering the operations of Gulfside Assembly is Marian T. Martin, its Executive Director since 1994 and as its Acting Director during previous intervening years.

Today, Gulfside Assembly is still being used as a meeting place for groups of African Americans from all walks of life. Business and religious retreats are regularly scheduled by groups, including inter-denominational attendees. The facility is open to all individuals who simply want to stretch out and bask in its magnificent history. Unquestionably, **Gulfside Assembly** is hallowed ground, not just for Black Methodists, but for all Black Americans.

The Robert E. Jones Memorial
The Administration Building is a magnificent hallmark at the Gulfside Assembly grounds.

Clermont Harbor - *Land Locked*

Several businessmen from New Orleans over a period of time have promoted the landlocked harbor by establishing a safe harbor, pier, and pavilion. It is complete with graded streets and sidewalks along side, where boats can enter the channel from the Sound to anchor at their homesite.

The Clermont Harbor Inn was completely destroyed by fire in June of 1946. The building, a two-story frame structure, had 40 rooms and 20 baths and had just been completely renovated by its new owners, only to be ravaged long before fire fighting equipment was brought to the scene.

The hotel was originally built by Orleanian, Charles Hopkins in 1915. It had just opened for summer business when the Storm of 1915 drove a large schooner through the center of the building.

In 1925, Hugh Turner Carr was brought in from Washington D.C. to manage the enterprise. He supervised the renovations and elevated the hotel ten feet in order to give the hostelry a showcase appearance as well as protection from future storm flooding. On July 4, 1926, Carr was host to a special excursion train which brought 500 people from New Orleans to celebrate the Grand Opening. However, the endeavor was only successful until the Depression of the '30s.

It was a few years later that Wilford Guerin of New Orleans took his turn at management -- when it burned down.

Bordage's Fishing Camp
The Marina and Fishing Camp is a favorite for those who wish to escape to tranquility and timeless beauty.

Bayou Caddy
in constant serenity

Courtesy of Ken Murphy

DIAMONDHEAD
A Resort Paradise

The Diamondhead Heritage

Diamondhead, Mississippi is a most unique resort and retirement community. Diamondhead provides a private setting with a Country Club life-style. Its location, elevation and overall size make it an exceptional residential community on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Its climate has an average daily temperature of 68 degrees punctuated by an average of 300 days a year of golden sunshine. Diamondhead enjoys mild weather conditions, ranging from 50 to 75 degrees in November and December. Summer breezes off the Gulf of Mexico and the Bay of St. Louis usually keep the weather in the 75 to 90 degree range. The Coastal summers provide a year-round attraction for people from all over the world.

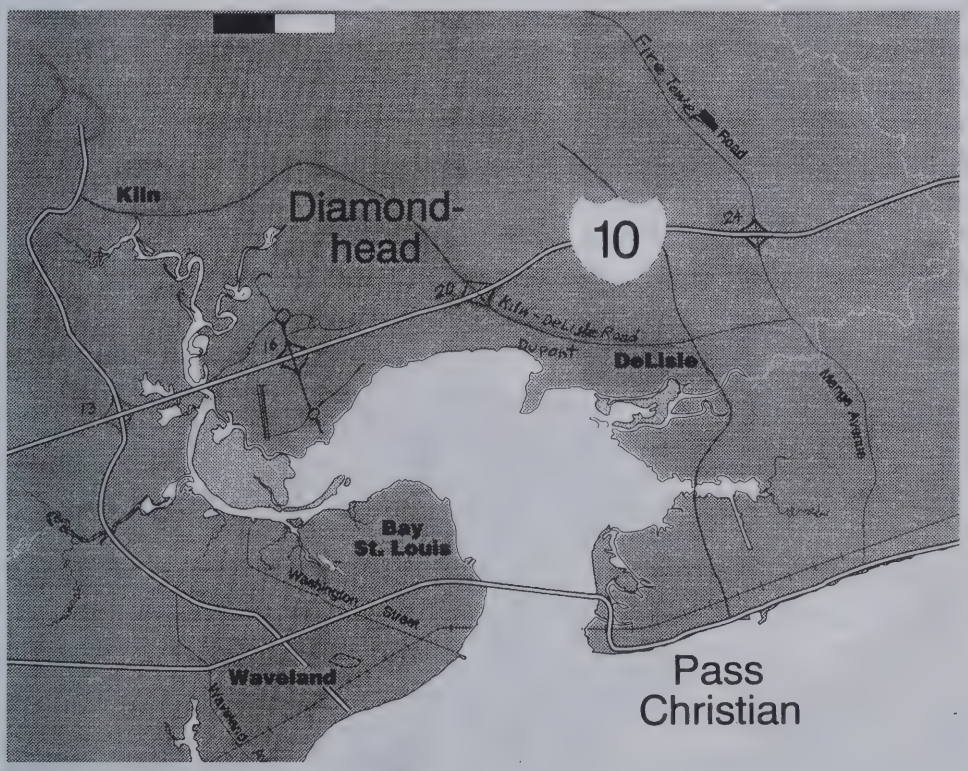
Summertime draws many southern residents and visitors seeking a family vacation spot in a resort setting. Diamondhead provides a series of lifetime pleasures and experiences for those who want to live in paradise. Residential home-sites or select condominiums offer fun time living surrounded by fabulous facilities.

Diamondhead is but an hour of easy driving from New Orleans or Baton Rouge, Louisiana; or, an hour and a half from Mobile, Alabama; and an hour or two from many locations throughout Mississippi. A significant number of Midwesterners have found Diamondhead to be an ideal location for their second home and a place to retire to. Much of the Midwest is but a one day drive.

The Yacht Club was the center of activity for early sales promotions and serves as the toasting grounds for Boat Parades.

Access to both private and public air transportation is most convenient. Moisant International Airport at New Orleans is a little more than an hour's driving time and the Gulfport/Biloxi Regional Airport is less than a half hour away. Diamondhead has its own private Airstrip providing hanger space or tie down facilities. The attractions, due to location and weather, are many. They include two golf courses, tennis courts, and a population of amiable residents who add to the *joie de vivre*. Diamondhead, often abbreviated, "D'head," is without traffic congestion --- no crowding, low stress, low cost of living, and a safe-zone, literally free of crime. Diamondhead is accessible to the Gulf Coast by several exits along the Interstate I-10 highway ribbon. The white sand beaches and antebellum homes at Pass Christian can be reached by less than 10 miles of roadway through historic DeLisle.

There were a number of people who realized the potential for the area once NASA was established and the I-10 was announced.



The Diamondhead Area Map displays the arena of communities surrounding the Bay of St. Louis. The Bay is divided by Hancock and Harrison Counties. New Orleans to the West is reached in less than an hour and the drive to Mobile to the East is within an hour and a half.

TheGex Heritage

The original Gex acreage in Diamondhead was purchased by Walter Gex, Sr. in 1937 from the Gulf State Paper Company and the Easy Opener Bag Company. These two pieces approximated 3700 acres. Additional acreage was later accumulated which brought the acquisitions to approximately 5000 acres. This property was sold in October of 1969 to D.E.A.R, Inc., an interim company representing the developer's interests. Designated shareholders were Malcolm Purcell McLean, the Founder of SeaLand, innovator of containerized shipping; and William Maurer, an investor and president of the D.E.A.R. Corporation which later became the Diamondhead Corporation.

In his law offices above the Merchant's Bank in Bay St. Louis, Jody Gex unrolled a frail parchment map with an oil cloth backing. He described that all of the "X" marks in red were the original Gex acreage. He pointed out the peripheral boundaries indicating that the tract of land almost abutted the back of the Bay of St. Louis and bordered the Jourdan River (or the St. Germain River as originally named by the French) and Rotten Bayou (or the Baneeshewah as named by the Indians, Bianchois as called by the early French). It was mostly high ground requiring no residential terracing or stilted pilings, and the ten square miles were dotted by ponds and small lakes.

The Cuevas home was the first European residence in Diamondhead, when Indians were still very much around. It was located on Rotten Bayou near the present residence of George Cassis at Malahini Place. The home was built in the early 1800s and destroyed by fire after 1930. *(Courtesy of Ames Kergosien of Bay St. Louis, a great-grandson of Cyrille Cuevas, one of the eleven children of Francois and Felicete Cuevas, for whom the Rotten Bayou Cemetery was dedicated.)*

Pulling out a sheaf of documents, Jody read the County resolution which provided the impetus for the interchange construction at the "Interchange" of Interstate 10 and Gex Boulevard. The County Road ran from the Kiln-Pass Christian Highway through the Gex tract which was known as Hickory Point Road. The highest elevation at Diamondhead is at Highpoint Condos which is 105 feet above sea level. Jody responded, "That is the highest point between Corpus Christi, Texas and St. Petersburg, Florida. For this reason, the development group called the area Diamondhead. The architectural engineers followed through with its Hawaiian derivation."

Actually, the property had almost been sold for development some ten years earlier. W.L. Holcomb with the real estate development company of Holcomb and Milner of Gulfport, was approached by Walter Gex, Sr. in 1960. Gex offered his 5200 acres for sale. Holcomb pursued the prospect by riding the hilly area on horseback. He was amazed at all the tall timber that covered the entire area. Billy Holcomb tells the story that as he alighted from the mount, he walked a ways through a clearing and stumbled into a hole. As he was raising himself, he was confronted by a shotgun pointed at him about 30 feet away.

The man behind the gun yelled out, "What the heck ya doin' here?" Billy replied, "I'm looking over Walter Gex's land that he wants to sell me!"

"Well, get the heck away from here right now!, stammered the man.

Needless to say, Billy Holcomb mounted his horse and steered clear of the area as he continued to survey the land. He reported to his partner that the land was very impressive for its high elevation and rolling hills. However, he felt that the cost to develop it would be astounding and would take 20 to 25 years to get their money back. The venture was too risky to pursue in light of the undetermined construction of an Interstate highway system. Needless to say, the property was sold for twice the offering.

Billy continued, "That same man came into my office about two weeks later offering me to purchase 80 acres of land around the Kiln."

The man looked at him real good and said, "Don't I know you? Weren't you riding around my *Moonshine Still* a few weeks back?"

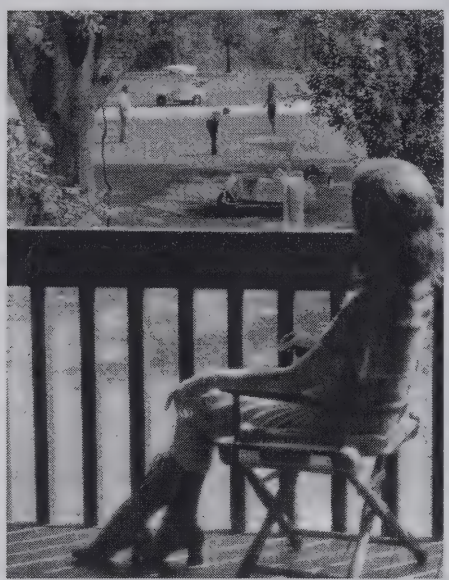
"Yeah, and I'm sure glad you didn't bring in your shotgun this time," retorted Billy.

The man grinned. And as things go, Billy Holcomb bought the property at the Kiln. W.L. Holcomb is still very much active in day to day activities as a partner in a local realty firm.

Diamondhead is ideally positioned on high ground without threats of flooding. It is perforated with bayous, rivers, and small lakes with the Bay of St. Louis at its feet.

Until 1928, the main roadway access to the Mississippi Coast from New Orleans was around the Bay of St. Louis by way of the Kiln-DeLisle road which took 30 minutes from Waveland to Pass Christian.

The Transformation



The highest elevation at Diamondhead is 105 feet above sea level. That point is located at Highpoint Condos and has the highest elevation between Corpus Christi, Texas, and St. Petersburg, Florida. For this reason, the Development Group called the area Diamondhead.

The first property sale which opened the door for the Diamondhead development was the commercial property where the Texaco station is presently located off Interstate 10.

In every land deal there has to be a *Chief Mechanic*. Somebody has to put the package together and have the foresight and hindsight to market it to the right promoters. It was Gary Gilmore who had the inside track to put a pulse to the embryonic form which was to become Diamondhead.

These machinations date back to 1967 and 1968. Gary was a close associate of the Gex family, who at that time, were youthful inheritors of the Gex property. Walter Gex, Sr. was the mastermind to acquire the large acreage. Gary also knew Mr. Gex, Sr. whom he called "Uncle Walter". Gary came to learn the hills and the high ground turf of the Gex Property because he traversed it frequently during quail hunting trips with "Uncle Walter". While the young Walter Gex, Jr. had been practicing law in Jackson, he asked Gary to participate in selling a site portion which is the present Texaco Station south of I-10. Its location was excellent due to the coming Interstate 10 throughway. Once Gary sold the option to the property, he became looked on as the man who could make things happen. --- And, happen they did. His connections with a principal from Greenwood, Mississippi put him in position to roll out the 5000 acres of Gex property. This is how Malcolm McLean was introduced to his future Paradise. The Deal was set to go down on Monday, August 18, 1969, the final day of the option. However, the "deal" almost splintered apart because on the preceding day occurred the most devastating hurricane in American history. Hurricane Camille's perilous journey caused almost total destruction to much of the Coastal area. However, McLean managed to fly over the property the following week and upon seeing so little damage, his interest in renewing the option remained strong. The only thing keeping the sale from being closed that week was due to the Storm, the Hancock Court system had been closed down to all transactions for a couple of weeks.

During the first phase of construction the Diamondhead Manufacturing Company in Mobile hired local construction crews to build the Kona and Molokai condo villages. In the next phase, the condo villages of Lanai and Lakeside, including the Fairway Motel Inn, which were pre-constructed, were transported in. Even the painted sheetrock, carpeting and drapes were pre-installed. A special barge had been built to carry the 50' by 30' units from Mobile to be brought ashore at the Rotten Bayou landing. A customized straddle carrier moved the prestuctured units to elevated pods, which then allowed flat-bed trucks to skate beneath, in order to move the housing units to their

respective sites. A crane lifted up each unit, which was then placed on prepared foundations. The Condos only needed finishing touch-ups to the steps and roofing.

The Hawaiian Heritage

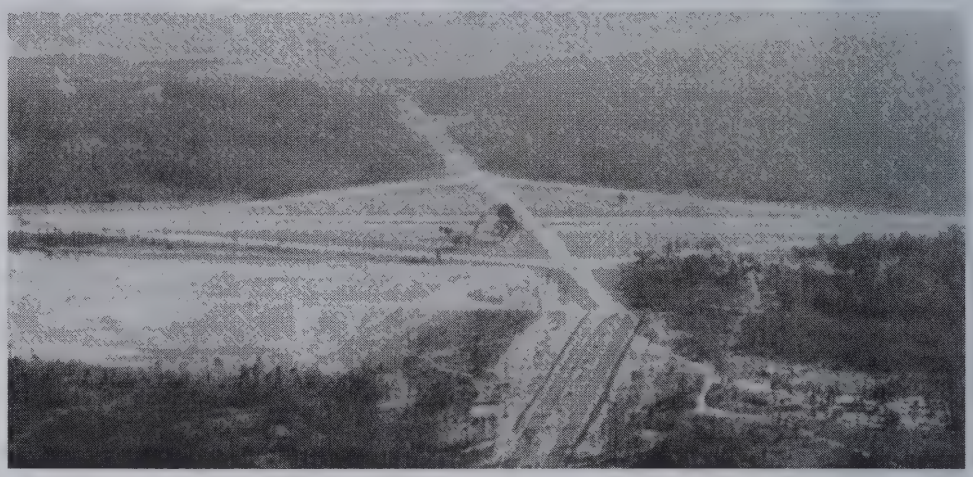
Luau parties were some of the most enjoyed events at the Yacht Club. Every Friday was party night as sales promotions invited many folks, particularly from out of town.

Southeast of Honolulu, Hawaii, is the Island of Oahu. Rising from the pacific waters is the great and magnificent promontory of Diamond Head. Hickory Point, Mississippi is a far cry from the image presented by the original Hawaiian Diamond Head, but not in the mind's eye of the visionary proponents.

Through Malcolm Purcell McLean's leadership, Diamondhead was a signal achievement which led to the success of other land promotions. These included such other developments which were in various stages of phasing, among them: Pinehurst in North Carolina; Lake Arrowhead, near Atlanta; Sandpiper Cove in Destin; Lake Forest outside Mobile; Newport near Houston; Mile High east of El Paso; and Falconhead, between Dallas and Oklahoma City. However, none were nearly as spectacular as Diamondhead. In the first marketing brochure, the essence of melding Hawaiian island tropics with the piney wood-lands and marshes became instant Mississippi Gold.

Coming Alive with Interstate-10

In the mean time, partial stretches of the Interstate 10 highway were being opened to traffic as completed. Thousands of Louisianians from New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas, having been denied their customary coastal playgrounds due to hurricane Camille's destruction, were encountering new Gulf Coast territories. It was a four hour drive to Florida but this didn't stop the weekend migrations. Thus, it was important to the Diamondhead interests, to press for the completion of the cloverleaf infrastructure in order to provide an in-and-out traffic interchange on I-10. Fortunately, because the property already had a roadway maintained by Hancock County, the Diamondhead Interchange at I-10 and Gex Boulevard was expedited in 1972. "Paradise" came alive for the developers.



The interchange connecting Interstate 10 and Gex Boulevard was a vital necessity for the developers. And in 1972, Diamondhead was connected to the major east-west artery.

The first lot sales were made in June of 1970. A small army of salesmen headed by Buzz Prince was commissioned to promote lot sales at Diamondhead. They were all dressed alike with red blazers and white trousers as they stood ready to escort their prospects in a fleet of twenty white vehicles.

Development and construction continued as the area was subdivided into streets, cul-de-sacs, drives, courts; most of which were given Polynesian names. Artificial lakes were dug. Condominium villas were built: the Molokai, the Kona, the Lanai and the Lakeside.

East and West Gulf Coast access is easy from Diamondhead to New Orleans and Mobile including accessways to miles and miles of Mississippi Beaches in Hancock and Harrison counties, which are reached within minutes.

A large, beautifully appointed building, with an Hawaiian motif, was built near the main entrance, and the sales lodge (the Community Center) became the hub of activity for selling lots. On the south side of I-10 a beautiful Yacht Club was being built, and on the north side a luxurious Country Club which burned down on November 12, 1995.

Paradise In The Making

Gladys Cox, one of the first Country Club employees, reminisced about the Top-Drawer treatment given to the guests. "Many blistered thumbs resulted as more than a thousand corks were popped from bottles of Champagne. The flow of the bubbly was poured hour after hour of hilarious fun making". "Thereafter, every weekend became a party. Bands were brought in from New Orleans every Friday and Saturday nights and for Sunday Jazz Brunches".

Cox, continued excitedly, "then there was the opening of the Yacht Club in 1975." She insists that she was at the Epicenter of shock waves which started that day at 11:00 a.m. and lasted continuously through the night into the following morning at 3:00 a.m. "It was fantastic! The club was jammed pack inside and out. People were squeezing through crowds in all manner of dress . . . they were in jeans, shorts, long slinky-things, and even furs."

"Chef Bill Vrazel prepared gourmet dishes that were out of this world. His extensive menu satisfied everyone's appetite. Because of his expertise and excellent lavishing style, he was appointed Manager of Food and Beverages for both the Country Club and, later, the Yacht Club."

Membership in Diamondhead can only be obtained through property ownership. Diamondhead offers a wide range of properties including a choice of condominiums, townhomes, cluster cottages, private homes or vacant lots.

For visitors, vacationers or even temporary weekenders who wish just to seek a get-a-way, they find that Diamondhead offers short term rental programs with one, two or three bedroom townhomes or condominiums. Guests of these accommodations are treated as guest-members of Diamondhead with access to all amenities. Special promotional programs are also offered with golf or tennis packages.

Many folks originally bought into the Condos and later realized that they wanted to establish larger homesteads. One of these was Gertrude Waddington who in 1973 was the first Condo owner in Molokai Village. She is happy to have settled into a home with gardens to care for.

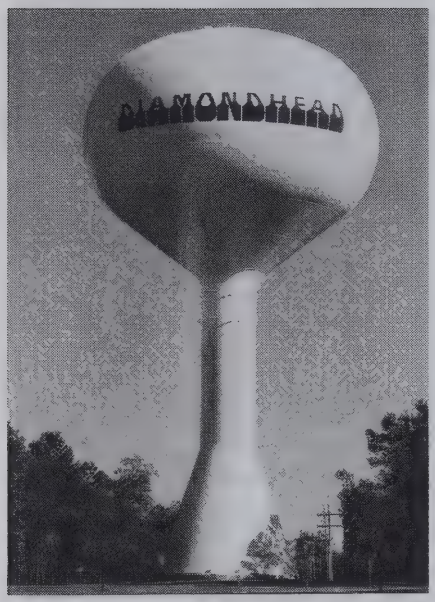
Mardi Gras had its first dry run in 1975 when five Golf Carts promenaded down Condo row with Wally and Alice Little leading in singing and dancing throughout Kona Villa. The following year the Krewe of Diamondhead was organized.

Aloha Paradise! -- Aloha Diamondhead! -- The Community Center, originally used as the Sales Lodge, was completed in 1971.

The first residential folks were Georgette Hall and her husband Norman. Georgette is most well known for her works; *The Sicilian* and *The House on Rampart Street.*

The first commercial store to open in Diamondhead was the Hinkey Dinkey, owned by Richard and Virginia Criss.

The Paradise Builders



Diamondhead consists of two former areas which were known as Hickory Point and Widowhill. Devil's Elbow was the favorite fishing spot for earlier settlers.

To the first wave of players, Diamondhead became their private vacation land. The lots were relatively inexpensive and buying a lot became a ticket to membership in an exclusive upscale weekend resort.

Some folks immediately purchased condos and by the end of 1972, 45 families had built the first houses. Friends were bringing in friends. By the end of 1975 there were 115 houses.

By 1977, 361 condo units had been sold. The population base of the residential community was ever increasing. In 1978 new development villages were being constructed, such as "Devil's Elbow" consisting of 13 homes and "The Oaks", a residential development of 100 homes. "Devil's Elbow" is located on beautiful Bayou Baneeshewah (Rotten Bayou). It has lovely 3 and 4 bedroom homes in either Acadian style (raised off the ground) or Creole style (ground level). They are adorned with walkways and piers surrounded by huge moss-hung oaks which shade the area and cast reflections upon the waters of Bayou Baneeshewah.

Those having a preference for the serenity of waterside, can enjoy the larger Harbor House Townhouses located along the waterway. With a Cape Cod design, these townhomes are ideally located adjacent to the Yacht Club and Marina. From the Harbor House, boaters have direct access to the Gulf of Mexico through the Bay of St. Louis.

Commercial development has also kept pace with housing development. Emphasis was placed on good planning and an abidance to regulations and restrictions. This has resulted in some conformity for facilities providing retail, financial, medical, and other services which has resulted in keeping them apart from residential units. This concept adheres to good security maintenance as well as traffic monitoring access.

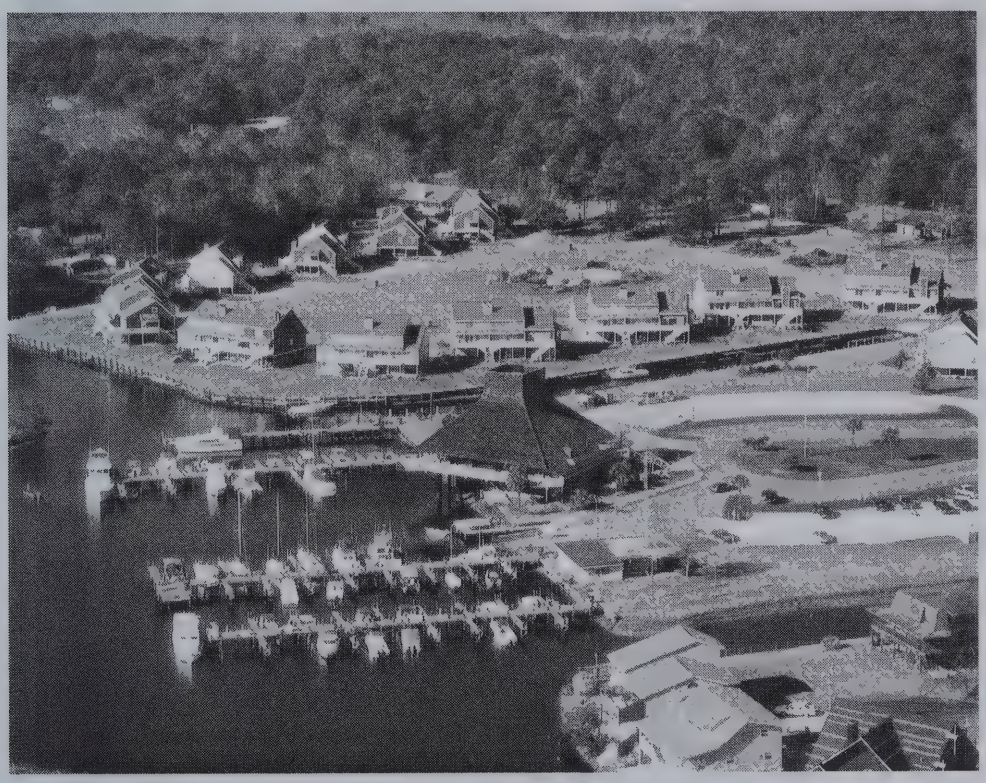
The Turning Point

The large staff of salesmen and the heightened promotions during the '70s kept a pace of intensified exhilaration and escalated passions for increased sales. These very same attitudes were conveyed upon every person sporting a membership. Diamondhead experienced its turning point in 1977. That year demonstrated significant growth in completions of the infrastructure and to community amenities. With Stennis Space Center expanding, and the Oceanographic Offices

relocating from Washington D.C., this further resulted in expanding sales.

Diamondhead, during that year, had 220 houses completed and 344 occupied condos. The population increased to approximately 1400. The "original" Country Club had made renovations to the main dining room and added the "19th hole". The First Cardinal "nine" was opened to add to the older "Pines" and "Magnolia" courses. The East Recreation Center was completed, the Tennis Pro Shop was opened, a new Horse Show Arena prepared for Rodeo Week, the boat population tripled at the Yacht Club. Two Mardi Gras Krewes officiated and promenaded with 25 Land units and 16 boats by "Sea."

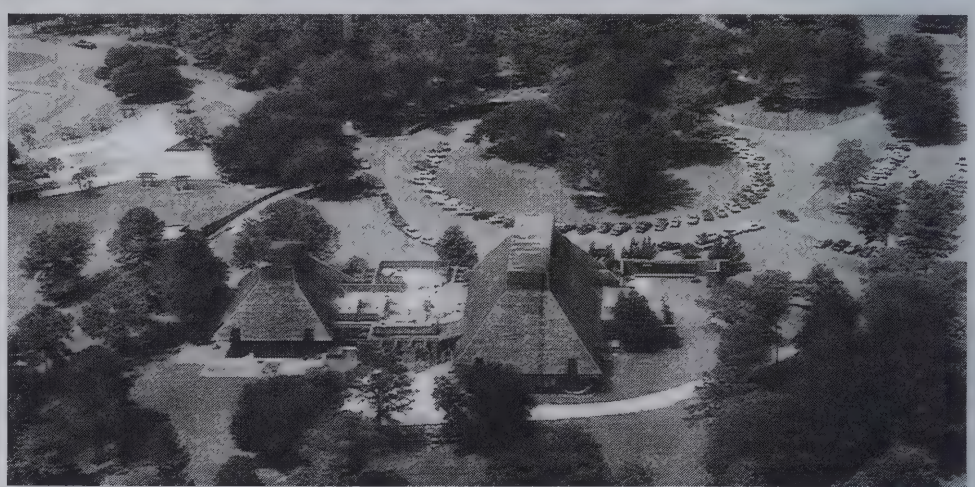
By 1985 there were 795 homes and at the end of 1994 Diamondhead had 1,904 homes not including approximately 600 condo units at the Villages of Molokai, Kona, Lanai, Lakeside, Highpoint, and Harbor Townhouses. The total of Diamondhead residences for its first twenty-five year growth period was Two Thousand and Fifty-five (2055) homes. The total population count for 1995 was approximately 5,500 residents with younger couples making a strong presence in making purchases. Indeed, Diamondhead is the fastest growing and largest residential, retirement and resort area in Mississippi, if not the Gulf South.



The homes at Diamondhead are varied as is its people. They range from quiet, unpretentious homes to elegantly emblazoned Show Places.

Phoenix in Paradise

At the time that Diamondhead was in preparation for its celebrations for its twenty-fifth year; and planning tribute to its forthcoming new decades and generations; the community's first landmark called out for its concluding acknowledgement. The Country Club burned down on Sunday, November 12, 1995. A fire alarm was called in at 7 p.m. drawing more than 150 residents to witness the finality of the focus of community social life. More than 100 firemen were called to action to fight the blazes, but to no avail. The wooden structure went fast and was all but finished when the wood-shingled roof took its last heave as a stream of fire and smoke spiraled into the skies.



The Country Club hosted many Diamondhead weekly and monthly functions as well as being the fulcrum point for local and regional golfing packages and tournaments. The weekly Karaoke nights and the monthly dances were favorites with members.
A new Country Club is in process of construction.

The smoldering ashes were still being washed down at 8 a.m. the following morning. A swarm of black crows flocked to the branches of the tall pines overlooking the awesome, scrambled mass of twisted, steel I-beams. Just a few charred wooden rafters were left as they boldly leaned skyward amidst the soot and debris. As if in mourning, the crows ceased their cawing for a respite in offering respect. Quietly and in sorrowful awe, residents who had just learned of the mishap were arriving by cart, car or afoot.

A new building under construction and scheduled to be open soon, will be larger and will accommodate greater numbers and events to handle the growth taking place in Diamondhead. Everyone looks forward with positive feelings yielding to the Phoenix as it rises in youthful freshness from its ashes. But, even so, the Community Club will persevere with observances in shared experiences and shared memories of many wonderful and beautiful past occasions which now are left for only the shadows to remember.

Aloha, to Paradise!

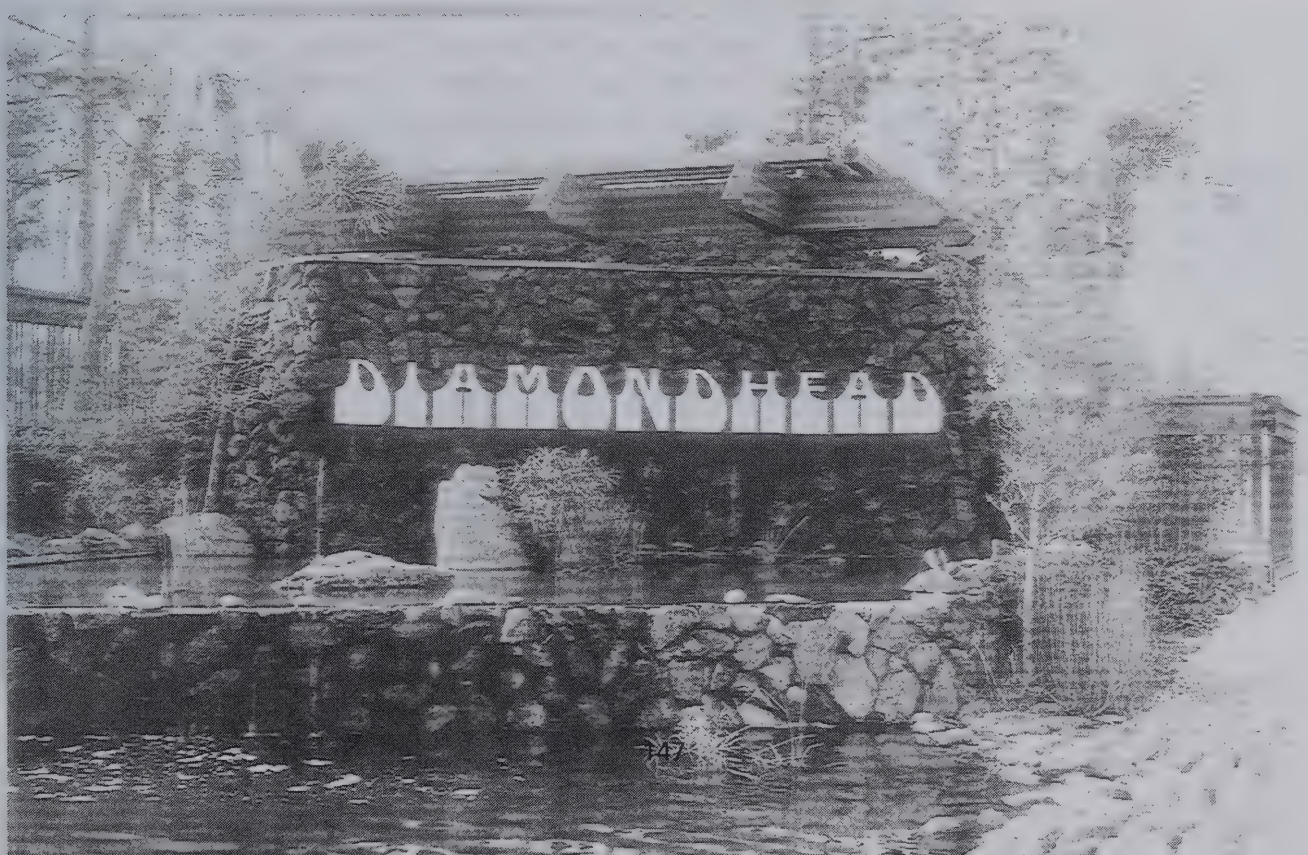
Cherubims lifting their wings on high,
East of the Garden of Eden.
Continuing in flight for the rest of the night,
Sounding their wings with reason.

Alighting among the tall piney hills,
Midst wondrous, aquatic expanse;
Echoing the call of dawn's early shrills,
Warmed softly to new romance.

Bearing peace and charm to a new abode,
In spiritual energy.
Blending joyful hearts in sportive mode;
With inexpressible beauty.

From whence you have come, you are now here lead,
Welcome to you, we entice.
Jubilation is here in Diamondhead;
Aloha, to Paradise!

Dan Ellis



Kilns and the Piney Woods

Mississippi's extensive pine and cypress timber forests were quite awesome with exceptionally towering trees. Following the first settlements, timber was cut and exported to France for construction of their naval fleet. The areas north of the Bay abounded with forests full of tall standing yellow pine. In addition to lumber mills, the early settlers built huge kilns which produced pine tar, with charcoal as a by-product from the fire under the kilns. Turpentine, which is used for paint, was distilled in the stills from resin or extracted sap from virgin, yellow pine trees. The large ovens were also used to dry and cure lumber. This section of Hancock County was at one time referred to as Three Rivers Mission --- the Wolf River to the East, the Jourdan in the middle, and the Pearl River, which flows on the West.

The Kiln *(the Kill)*

The Kiln, located a few miles west of Diamondhead, and just ten miles north of Waveland, was named for all the large kilns built by the early French settlers. The kilns produced naval stores such as tar shipped by schooner to New Orleans and used for caulking ships.

Jean Baptiste Nicaise married Louise Baptiste Ladner at Mobile on May 11, 1745. After settling the Bay St. Louis area they became early settlers of the Kiln area in 1813. Noel Jourdan, for which the River is named had been awarded a Spanish land grant which included the area of Diamondhead. He made his home at Hickory Point.

Francois Haas built a saw Mill on Bayou Talla following the Civil War and later it became known as the Herlihy & Haas Mill. In 1870, Captain Samuel L. Favre built a sawmill and general store. Both of these mills were purchased by W. W. Carré in 1908 and a few years later, it was sold to the Dantzler and Edward Hines lumbermen of Chicago. Called the Jourdan River Lumber Company, it was the largest sawmill in the South, only to result in its big plant burning down on October 28, 1913.

The town had 200 mill houses and a railroad was constructed to haul out lumber and also accommodate passengers. This was followed by the building of a fifty room hotel, a company hospital, a commissary, a large dry kiln, and a lumber yard.

In the process of new construction and renovations, rumors became alive about Pirate treasures having been buried in the area. It was not unusual for dwellers to awaken to find that their yards had been dug up during the night.

With the "*Great Depression,*" the town lost its sawmill, its hotel, its hospital and its railroad. Many folks left while those who remained eked out a living by distilling illegal whiskey. This was more commonly called *White Lightning* or *Jourdan River Dew* which was 180 proof.

Brett Favre Fever has resulted in some places becoming overnight successes -- and thousands of T-shirt sales to tourists who want a bit of the Kiln to take back home.

Bonita French Favre, Brett's mother, as Queen Christiana -- Her Majesty heralded in one of the many coastal parades at Pass Christian.

Reagan Melancon -- one of the truly beautiful young belles to grace the Coastal scene.

It was not long before the Kiln became known as the *Moonshine Capital of the World*. The Bay and its surrounding waters, in particular the Jourdan River, were waterways well known to Al Capone and his gang as they ran their ex-Coast Guard cutter up the waters bringing bootleg whiskey and illegal rum from Cuba. This wet booty was unloaded at Hickory Point and trucked overland to Chicago.

In *Hometown Mississippi*, James Brieger reported that, "During the Prohibition era the territory around Kiln was the center of a moonshining industry and was known for its quality of whiskey as far north as Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is said that one boat alone brought 1,000 sacks of sugar a week here for the manufacture of whiskey at the famous kiln called *Shinny*."

Local Coastians have their own way of pronouncing names. The town of Kiln is called *The Kill*.

Until recently, the area had become adapted to dairy farming, but the Kiln has become the fastest growing residential area in the County. Subdivisions are steadily under construction, resulting in a new library, a new post office, an elementary school and a middle school are on the drawing board and are proposed for completion within the next few years.

The 1997 Super Bowl resulted in a rush to the Kiln by Green Back fans and Wisconsin "Cheeseheads" which has diminished to a steady stream of tourists who prevail with *Favremania*. To make sure that travelers are made aware that they have arrived at the Kiln, a large welcome sign announces the *Home of Brett Favre.*

The Kiln is also known for another of its beauty celebrities. Reagan Melancon, a senior at the University of Mississippi has captured many hearts due to her charm and beauty. As *Miss Dixieland*, she has also competed in and has won a number of beauty contests along the Gulf Coast and throughout Mississippi.

Annunciation Church

The Kiln was part of the early Three Rivers missions including Pearl River, Jordan River and Wolf River as served by Father Buteux and later, Father LeDuc and eventually an appointment of Father H.A. DeMorangies as resident priest of the area in April 1869. In November 1872, Father T. Meerschaert took over the missions followed by Father A. Oberti in October 1874, and Father A.J. van Waesberghe from 1881 to 1890.

As reported in Our Lady of Gulf church records, on April 30, 1879, the mission church called Annunciation Church was blessed and there were 42 confirmations consisting of 18 men and 24 ladies including 20 converts administered to. In November 1886, the new Church of the Annunciation was built at Jordan River to replace the old one which was outgrown.

Rev. Eugene Schmitt and Rev. Joseph Chauvin were followed by Rev A.C. Denis in August 1919. The Jordan River parish became known as the Kiln in 1913 and served missions at Bayou Cadet, La Croix (Dilleville), Pearlington, Logtown, Fenton, M. Chevas and the Alcey Nicaise settlement, as well as White Cypress (Standard) and in later years, at Vidalia and Rocky Hill until churches were built there.

Fenton

The town of Fenton is situated just north of Diamondhead. It is located four miles east of the Kiln on a road initially cut through the Jourdan River Swamp. It was also an early sawmill town. Logs were hauled through the swampy terrain on ox-wagons to waiting barges on the Jourdan River. Slave labor was brought in to work the timber forests. The Fenton Turpentine Co. during its peak was producing 2500 Barrels of Spirits and 10,000 barrels of rosin.

Gaits To Success

"Gaits to Sucess" Therapeutic Horsemanship Center, Inc. is a non-profit organization and a member of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. Located at the Kiln, these **Volunteers** utilize a team approach in designing a special therapy plan for each disabled student.

Therapeutic horseback riding is a unique approach to help people with mental, physical, emotional and learning disabilities.

To donate, volunteer or visit, call 255-5368.

For many years, Fenton maintained a Negro settlement just east of the town which was populated solely by descendants of slaves originating from Senegal. Their forefathers were considered to have the highest mental and physical qualities of all African slaves. This resulted in their restricting intermarriages outside of their group. By controlled inbreeding, they succeeded in maintaining an unmixed bloodline for many generations.

Fenton was also the birthplace of the renown poet of the Cuevas family. In 1934, Earl Cuevas was conferred with national recognition as Poet Laureate of Mississippi by the Poet Laureate League of America in Washington D.C. Cuevas was honored for his works and attributes as a poetic genius.

Jourdan River Shores

Jourdan River Shores is a family residential development along the Jourdan River off Highway 603. Most of the residences are raised on pilings by way of flood water restrictions and are laid out along natural and man-made water inlets. It is located between the Kiln and Interstate 10. The river's namesake, Noel Jourdan, was a delegate to the Mississippi Constitution Convention and was a State Representative for Hancock County at the First General Assembly in 1818.

McLeod Water Park

Opened in May 1975 by the State of Mississippi, the park is located along the banks of the Jourdan River off Highway 603 out of the Kiln. The memorial park was by donation from the McLeod family. Albert McLeod operated a turpentine still and general store on the west corner of the Jourdan River off the Highway. This 328 acres tract of woodland was added to by a gift from the National Space Technology Laboratories. It is maintained as a project of the Pearl River Basin Development District.

Accommodations at the Park are primarily for camping and picnicking. Besides the main picnic area with 20 tables, there are cooking facilities, and two comfort stations with showers. Nearby is a ballfield with bleachers and a two story pavilion. For campers, there is a camping loop with many parking sites available. There are twin launching ramps and a one-mile hiking Nature Trail with foot bridges. A caretaker is on-premises and area lighting is provided for the evenings.

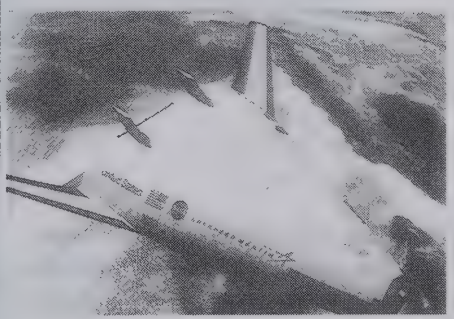
Holly Bluff

Holly Bluff is located off Highway 603 by way of a private road to the beautiful gardens of the Jordan River. In 1933, Mr. and Mrs. James L. Crump acquired this site which was a former Indian settlement. The Crumps developed the area by reforestation and cultivating magnificent gardens which have become nationally recognized as a special showplace on the Gulf Coast. The estate occupies thirty-seven hundred acres with ten miles of water frontage.

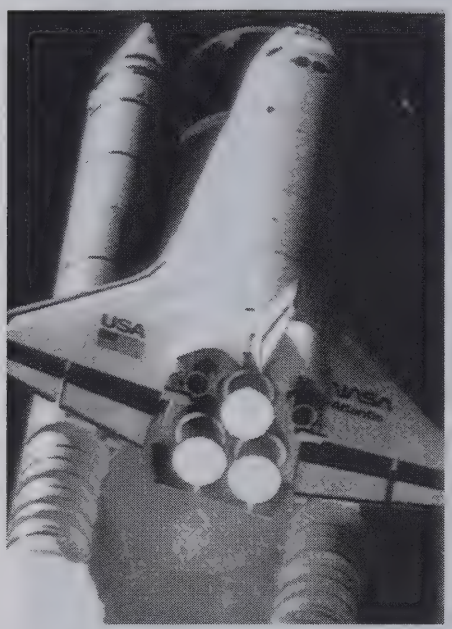
The gardens occupy 50 acres alone, with two miles of paths covered with soft pine needles. A feature of the garden is the variety of holly trees, including giant Southern hollies along with Chinese, Korean and English importations. Along shaded paths are countless varieties of camellias, azaleas, ardesia, mountain laurel, spiraea, iris, gardenia, ferns and much more.

The massive log cabin lodge is home to the owners. It is constructed entirely of red cypress beams with more than 6,000 hand hewn "shakes" or shingles of seasoned cypress and juniper atop its roof. An added feature on the grounds is "The Little Museum", which is comprised of many collections of art objects and oddities of fancy. In the cemetery will be found the Statue of Louis IX, namesake for Bay St. Louis. The marble statue was brought from Rigny, France.

Stennis Space Center



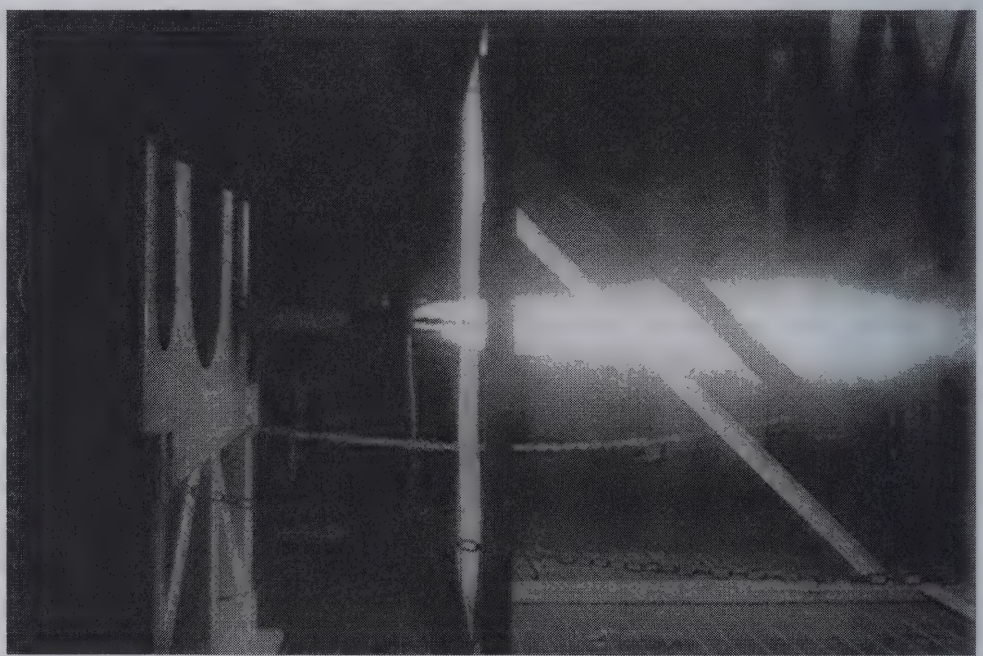
In the late 1960's, the NASA U.S. Space Program constructed the Stennis Space Center and Testing Facility with all its associated offices in Hancock County. Three hugh test-stands were constructed to test the newer generation liquid hydrogen powered engines used in the space shuttle. With the testing of the huge engines it became necessary for NASA to acquire or lease a substantial buffer zone which has a seven mile radius. This was needed to protect homes and residents from noise and vibrations involved during the testing process. In order to provide the buffer zone, the government acquired this vast area constituting almost 1/3 of the County's 485 square miles. The Zone does not allow residency or overnight occupancy. The eastern perimeter extends almost to Highway 603 just west of the Stennis Airport and south to Highway 43. There are numerous other government facilities which share the area.



NASA's high-performance, liquid-fueled engines provide most of the total impulse needed during a shuttle's eight and one-half-minute flight into orbit. Prior to being installed, they are first tested at the John C. Stennis Space Center.

Open to the public, is the Stennis Space Center Visitors Center which offers fun, excitement and learning for the whole family at no charge. It is open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., except some Holidays. Visitors can trace the history of NASA and space flight and see many exhibits representing other agencies located at Stennis which includes the U.S. Navy's world-class oceanographic community. NASA's direct economic impact upon the joint Mississippi and Louisiana area, approximates $400 million and effects the employment of nearly 14,000 jobs. The Stennis Space Center has a tax revenue impact of $30 million on local government and $200 million on local area retail sales.

The Space Center provides films, lectures and demonstrations which are made available by tour guides. A massive 154-foot Space Shuttle external fuel tank and various rocket models are on display. Visitors who are extending their day can even purchase lunch at the Space Tower Grill. Several educational programs are offered to young children. One program is EEM or Early Education Monday specifically designed to motivate children ages 3 through 6 years in developing interests through interaction with scientific and mathematical concepts in addition to basic skills. Another program is LEAP or Lower Elementary Aerospace Education Program designed to intro-duce concepts in Living and Working in Space. A Teacher Resource Center provides support materials to elementary level classroom teachers. SpaceFEST is another program, specifically designed for Families Exploring Space Together.

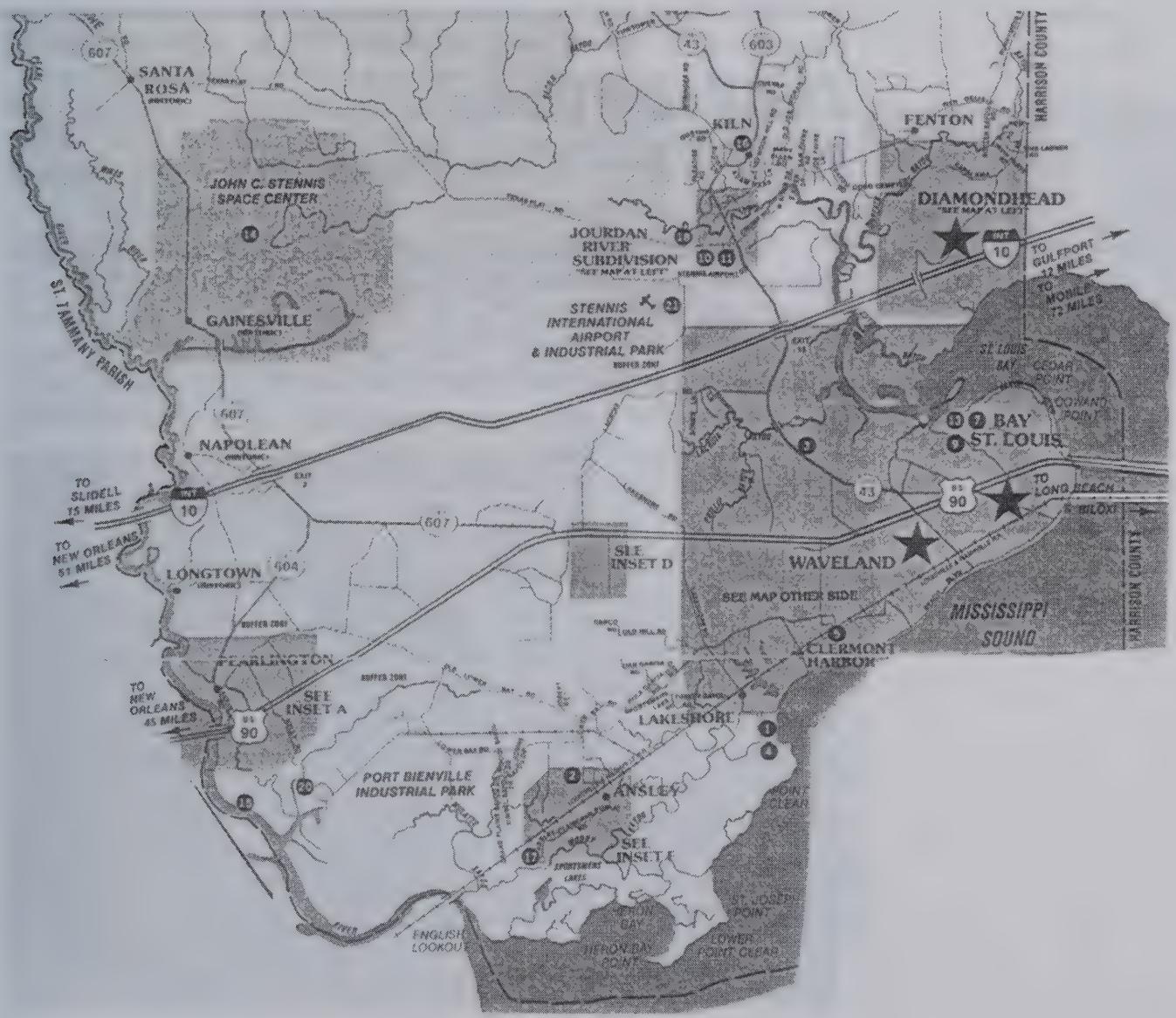


Test Firing of a commercial hybrid rocket motor is one example of NASA's partnering with private industry.

Come Experience Space Travel With Us

Throughout the day, visitors can take free bus tours to the rocket test complex where the hugh test-stands tower high above the South Mississippi landscape. The Visitors Center tour guides conduct educational lectures during the tours to many exciting adventures.

NASA also has promoted programs to share its libraries of information and vast technological database with the American workplace. The space program has produced measureless advances in medicine, engineering, manufacturing, agriculture and other resources, of which the agency encourages businesses and entrepreneurs across the nation to avail themselves.



The Pearl River
Pearl River Communities

The Pearl River was called the *Riviere Perle* by the early French explorers in 1699. Bienville had explored the mouths of the East and Middle Pearl rivers and a group of French adventurers found pearls from oysters near the banks. These pearls were sent with Iberville's first return trip to France as proof of treasures from the new colonies. The area became one of the oldest communities on the Coast following Ocean Springs and Biloxi.

The Lumber Mills

In a book, by Nollie W. Hickman entitled *Mississippi Harvest*, the author stated that, "By 1840 there were ten sawmills in operation in Hancock County and in that part of Hancock which became Harrison County in 1843. Because logs had to be brought to the mills by water from interior forests, and lumber shipped to outside markets by boat, almost all of the early mills in the coast country were erected at river mouths or on the banks of bayous which extended a few miles into the interior. In Hancock County the mills were a short distance up the Pearl River from Lake Borgne. Early sawmill sites were Pearlington, Napoleon, Logtown and Gainsville, located on the Pearl."

Transporting lumber and its by-products from the heart of the piney woods was of utmost importance. Before rail spurs were run, ox-carts dragged or hauled the cut timber to the nearest water access. Cypress and pine logs were manufactured into lumber, staves and shingles; then shipped by schooners and brigs to the markets at New Orleans or Ship Island for export.

With developing technology, steamboats were designed with the engine, pilot house, and living quarters built as far to the stern as possible. This gave the boat 30 or 40 feet of deck space for loading lumber, as well as storage in the hold.

Eventually, the more economical tug boats were put into use with barges. In those days, barges were towed behind the tug, whereas today, barges are placed ahead of the tug, and pushed. Lumber was shipped out of Gulfport or taken to New Orleans to be shipped to foreign countries. In 1922, the largest tow of lumber that was ever taken out of Logtown was nine barges containing a little over a million feet of lumber. This tow was handled by one tug boat, the 65-foot "*Edgar*", and was taken to Gulfport. From there it was shipped to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

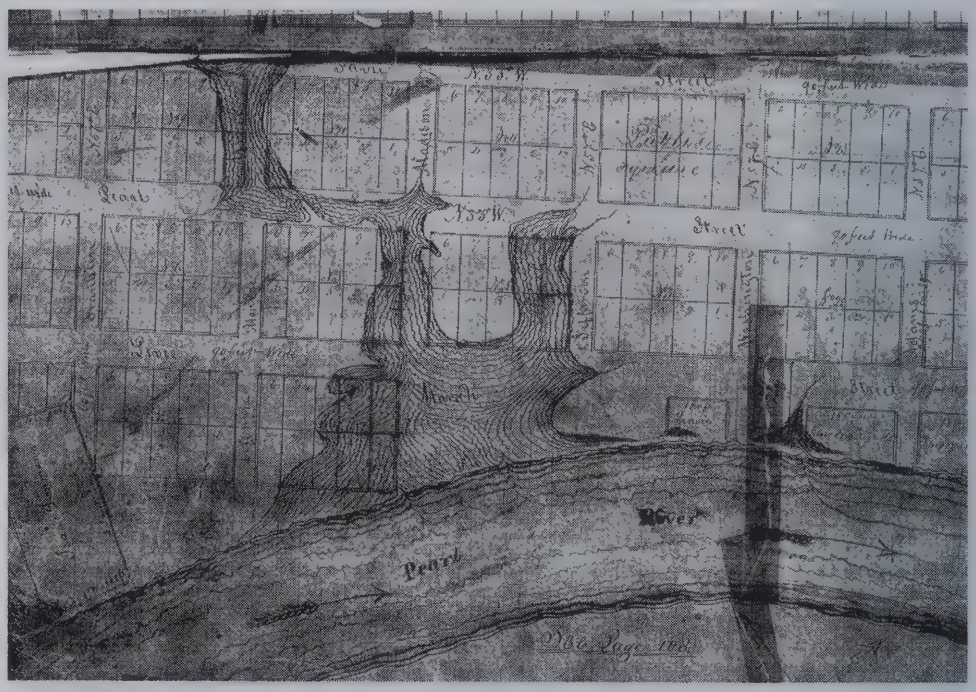
Before the Civil War, the mills were smaller and the job tasks were primarily performed by slave labor. It was not unusual for the mill owners to form combines and partnerships, such as in the cases of W.J. Poitevent, D.R. Wingate, W.W. Carré, and Henry Weston.

The H. Weston Lumber Company began its operation with four two masted schooners as were used before the Civil War and for a considerable time afterwards.

An article, written by Mildred Otis Fountain about the Weston Lumber Company at Logtown was reported in a 1930 edition of *The Lumber Trade Journal.* It stated that, "the production of lumber has been continuous and its distribution has been very wide. Lumber has been shipped around Cape Horn to Guayaquil and Punta Arenas, Argentina, to both East and West Africa, and to various European countries bordering on the Atlantic and Mediterranean. One shipment went by rail to San Francisco thence by water to Korea. In fact, the product of the Logtown Mills has been shipped to nearly every country in the world that imports lumber. The history of the operation is very interesting."

Pearlington

Much as the name denotes, the town was named for the river along which the city was formed and laid out. It is located about nineteen miles southwest of Bay St. Louis. It was the main junction between Louisiana and Mississippi,which was accessed early by its roadway and ferry system. That route is now called "old Highway 90." Pearlington is still a functional and historic village which is almost hidden. It was by-passed by the Interstate 10 corridor, but was not absorbed into the NASA complex.



Pearlington's original Plat Plan
This plat was found in the Deed Books at the Hancock County Courthouse.

From Kin to Kaint

When Asa Hursey, Jr. died on December 6, 1912, Ab Tourne walked from the Kiln to Pearlington to attend his funeral. Arriving at the Hursey home, he went directly to the widow and told her, "All that I am in life today I owe to your husband. He gave me my chance."

Asa Hursey, Jr. was a diligent worker. He worked from "kin to kaint" in the mill. He would work his vegetable garden past sundown to give to his neighbors; and on Sundays, his wife would say, "Papa, why don't you stay with me and the children?" His answer was, "Mama, if I don't work on Sunday, there'll be families in Pearlington go hungry next week."

The millwright in a sawmill was a most important person. It was his job to see that the mill was kept operating. If anything went wrong the millwright corrected it as quickly as possible. It was not unusual for a millwright to work all night, all the next day, and into the next night, while making necessary repairs to keep the mill operational.

In his father's footsteps --

Asa Hursey, Jr. followed in the footsteps of his father. Asa Hursey, Sr. was a self-taught architect, draftsman, engineer and millwright. Asa Sr. came to Hancock County from Maine in the 1840s, after having worked in a sawmill in which he was a part owner.

Like a number of other settlers at the lower reaches of the Pearl River, Asa Hursey, Sr. made his way to Pearlington as a member of a boat crew. Christian Koch and Henry Weston, also, were among those who first came to Logtown by boat. Many early settlers along the Pearl made their way up the river instead of coming across country.

Shortly after his arrival, Hursey changed the spelling of his name from Hussey to Hursey, married Miss Isabella McCall, and with Emile Mazily, they started the Hursey and Mazily Mill at Hobolochitto. This mill continued to run until December 1, 1848, when the Pearlington Company gave Hursey and Mazily a lease on the river front to put a mill on the "public quay". When Pearlington was laid out by the Pearlington Company, the riverfront was evidently the public wharf for docking. The Town of Pearlington still has a small public quay in front of the Gutierrez and Poitevent old locations.

In 1849, Asa Hursey, Sr. was elected Justice of the Peace of Beat 1 District of Hancock County, and in 1852, he was appointed postmaster of the Pearlington postoffice.

Shortly before his death in 1871, he was appointed coroner of Hancock County.

Shotgun Quarantines

The sawmills continued to operate inspite of Yellow Fever epidemics. The State Militia were called out to prevent anyone from leaving and to keep anyone from entering. This action was called the Shotgun Quarantine. Logs were still sent down the river to keep the sawmills supplied.

Young Hursey

After his father's death, young Hursey ran the family mill until it was sold to Poitevent and Favre. After Hursey, Jr. married, attending classes with his children, he learned to read and gained knowledge in engineering, drafting, and surveying. As a millwright, Asa answered the need for specific tools by designing his own devices and sending the drawings to a machine tool company in Philadelphia. They would manufacture the tool and return it to him stamped "*patent applied for*", --- in their own name. His only interest was to get the tools needed for his immediate use. However, with the vast virgin forests and increasing numbers of sawmills, those tools became universally used.

The Piney Woods supplied timber to European markets starting with the early French colony. After the Civil War, Mississippi lumber was shipped to Panama to be used as sheet piling in building the dams. It was the Piney Woods that gave justification for Gulfport to be established in 1898, with the construction of the North South Railroad and the dredging of the 12 mile channel from the mile-long pier at Gulfport to Ship Island. The channel was dredged 310 feet wide and 23 feet deep when completed in 1903.

During the early history of sawmills, there wasn't much by way of fire protection, therefore, it was a common occurrence for mills to burn down. There was always combustible refuse around the mills creating a constant fire hazard. When the second Poitevent and Favre mill burned, they immediately planned a much bigger and better mill. Asa Hursey, Jr. had efficiently built both of the previous sawmills, which were good money producers. Therefore, Captain John Poitevent took Asa with him on an extended tour to all the big sawmills along the eastern seaboard. They planned to build the biggest sawmill and the best one in the world with a capacity to cut 200,000 board feet of lumber a day. After visiting mills at Mobile, the Florida coast, and the Atlantic coast as far as Maine, they selected the best features of all the mills to incorporate into their new Pearlington mill.

With diligent planning, they built what was at that time the biggest and most efficient sawmill in the world. Hursey drew all the plans and supervised the building of the mill. Conveyors carried all slabs, sawdust and refuse automatically to the boiler rooms for use as fuel. The new mill, built to run 100 years, was called *Big Jim*.

During his lifetime, Asa Hursey, Jr. was considered a kind, thoughtful, lovable and most useful man. No one died in Pearlington, white or black, without his going to the bereaved and offering his services. Usually he would prepare the body for burial and would even go to his shop at the sawmill to make a coffin. Asa also befriended the young men by taking them into the mill to teach them a trade.

He was highly praised for his great service to his community. As treasurer of several lodges that carried insurance policies on their members, he knew which ones paid and those who did not. In many instances he paid out of his own pocket for those unfortunates who could not. Years later, after Asa died, his widow was subsidized by Asa's former lodge brothers in redeeming past indebtedness. They paid her monies due her husband from prior unsettled accounts.

Logtown

Logtown, located about three miles north of Pearlington, faced the Pearl River and the Honey Island Swamp. It was originally called *Chalons* for Joseph Chalon, one of its early French settlers from 1805. The name was changed when the town became a focal point for log shipments. Its natives referred to it as Log Town and later, changed to Logtown.

This was the home for the large H. Weston general store, several schools and churches, and the huge lumber plant covering one mile of water front on the Pearl River including their own docks for loading vessels. They operated sawmills and planing mills, a lumber yard covering 30 acres, and their own standard gauge railroad. Completely autonomous, they operated their own electric and ice plant and their own fleet of schooners, tugboats and barges, as well as ship yards. In 1920, the mill owners claimed that they had sufficient timber on lands of their own that would allow the mill to operate independently for another twenty years. They also raised cattle on their cut-over lands.

One of its first pioneers, in 1833, was Captain Christian Koch of Denmark. He was a horticulturist who created gardens filled with fruit trees, vegetables, and acres filled with a wide variety of flowers.

During the heyday of River Sawmills, Italian fruit peddlers from New Orleans would maneuver their barges upriver to sell their wares door to door. Also, there were "floating saloons" which operated on the Louisiana side of the river because Mississippi law prohibited alcoholic sales within five miles of a school. Taxi boats were pressed into service to carry the flourishing bar-trade back and forth.

Napoleon

Located six miles north of Pearlington, this community was named for Jerome Napoleon, brother of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. Jerome camped there for a few days while on a rescue mission to organize an attempt to free his imprisoned brother.

When the Napoleon Baptist Church was torn down along with two trees that were assessed to be 150 years old, the up-rooting, revealed coins dating to 1721, thus indicating buried treasure.

Brick Making was one of the early industries with the many forts that were built to protect the water-ways. One of the brickyards produced all the brick for Fort Pike at the Rigolets.

Simon Favre -- His Settlement

As reported in *The Favre Family*, a genealogical study by Jerry Heitzman, Jean Baptiste Favre, Jr. was born in 1693 at Royan, France and by his second wife, Marie Anne Arlut, he had four children.

One of his sons, Jean Claude, was born April 16, 1721. He married a Swiss soldier's daughter, Marguerite Wiltz, on June 7, 1759. Also an official government interpreter like his father, Jean Claude traveled and lived in many Indian villages, which resulted in his spawning many illicit children. As early as 1767, Jean Claude had spent time in developing plantations along the Pearl River. Those properties, two of which were along the Pearl River, averaged 1200 acres each.

Before his death, in 1782, Jean Claude and Marguerite gave birth to five legal heirs. One was Simon Favre who was born in 1760. Simon married late in life to Celeste Rochon on March 25, 1801, bearing six children including one earlier declared illegitimate child by Rebecca Austin. Like his father and grandfather, he, too, became a government interpreter, which also resulted in extensive travels and frequent lodgings with Indians throughout the Coast and upper Mississippi.

During his tenure as an Interpreter, he participated in the signing of many Indian treaties and often negotiated for Andrew Jackson. As a well educated man, he was chosen one of the four coastal magistrates appointed by Governor W.C.C. Claiborne, through Dr. Flood's mission in 1811. Simon served as Lieutenant Colonel of the Hancock Militia in 1812 and was very instrumental in bringing the Choctaw Nation to the aid of the American cause. However, he died before the Battle of New Orleans in 1813.

Before his death in 1806, Simon settled upon his father's claims along the Pearl River.

Simon Favre

It is reported by Simon's descendants, that "Simon Favre had illegitimate children - white, red and black - scattered all the way from New Orleans to Mobile, and in the eastern part of Mississippi where his *Farve* Indian descendants still live today in Neshoba and surrounding counties".

Gainesville

Located ten miles north of Pearlington, the town was named for Dr. Ambrose Gaines, who in 1810 received one of the last Spanish grants from Juan Morales. Gaines settled along the East Branch of the Pearl River, platted his 500 acres, and sold lots to new settlers, thereby creating Gainesville.

It was the county-seat for many years, until a fire destroyed the courthouse in 1853. However, Gainesville continued as a thriving community until the railroad that was built in 1883 bypassed the area. Once the timber had been cut away, the town passed into oblivion. It met its final destiny in 1962, when it was absorbed into the lands of the National Space Technology Laboratories.

"Pearl Rivers"

Eliza Jane Poitevent was born on March 11, 1849, on the banks of the Pearl River at Gainesville. Her father was Captain John Poitevent, a lumberman and steamship builder, who descended from French Huguenots. Her mother contracted a prolonged illness, which resulted in Eliza Jane being sent to live with an aunt who had no children. Under such a strong adult influence, the single, white child, living on the vast ante-bellum plantation, developed an innate creativity. Whimsical fantasies flitted through her mind while playing quietly by herself in the flower-bright yard of the "big house".

While attending the Amite Female Seminary in Louisiana, she became absorbed in a new-found ability to write verse. Her earliest poems were written by the time she reached 14 years of age.

An opportunity to practice clear and apt expression in prose seems to have been the main advantage she gained in school. Free from hindrance, the young author turned more seriously to her work. She began to use the pen name - "*Pearl Rivers*" - as a tribute to her birthplace.

Some of her earliest work was published in the "*New York Journal*" and "*The South*" to which Pearl Rivers became a regular contributor. The "*New Orleans Times*", the "*New Orleans Daily Picayune*" and occasionally a paper elsewhere, accepted her work. While visiting her grandfather in New Orleans, Pearl Rivers became acquainted with Col. Alva Morris Holbrook, owner of the "*Picayune*". Colonel Holbrook knew of her ability to write prose and gave her a position as Literary Editor of the "*Picayune*" at $25 a week. The following year, the 64-year old Holbrook divorced his wife and married the 23-year old Eliza. The young bride was assaulted by the betrayed wife and was shot at twice -- but, fortunately for Eliza, her assailant missed.

The elderly Holbrook died a few years later, leaving the "*Daily Picayune*" in a state of indebtedness. Rallied by her inner strengths, Pearl Rivers assumed the role of Publisher and Editor. Relying on the support of her newspaper staff, one of whom was, George Nicholson, a part owner and long-time employee of the paper.

A few years later, George Nicholson married Elisa and because she wanted to live near her roots, they established a monumental palace as their home in Waveland.

Pearl Rivers was an inspiration to her staff and to her avid readers. She was also a major influence to other female columnists whom she introduced to the literary world.

Pearl Rivers

"As a staid publisher she could, on occasion, revert to the mood of vanished days and tall stories of pixies and elves, half-believed, who lived in flowers or under the shade of moss-draped trees. Yet, dreams and fancies were only a part of her well-rounded life. She hunted for fairies and "doodles" with equal zest. Hers was first-hand knowledge of nature. Broomstraw and pink and marigold burrs, "Spanish-needles" and "heart-leaves" were familiar friends, as well as the lily and the rose. Snails and crickets and caterpillars, "daddy-long-legs", red ants and the lowly toad, all the little creatures of the grasses and streams, were as well known as the dogs and horses that to her seemed as good as humans."

Pearl Rivers sounded her protest with the rigors of school work with the following.

"March Month"

What's the use of all this reading?
Not a line is understood;
I cannot keep my heart from heeding
All the new sounds in the wood.
Out upon you! Grim old Gibbon,
Striving hard to make me wise;
Scowling at me from these pages;
Fresher knowledge round me lies.

Some of these included Elizabeth Gilmer, more commonly known as Dorothy Dix and Martha Field, also known as Catherine Cole.

The Nicolsons of Waveland
Their long time service to the Waveland community resulted in the naming of the street -- Nicholson Avenue.

The Claiborne Home

Near to the mouth of the Pearl on Mulatto Bayou was built a home by Louis Boisdore on his French and Spanish Land claims. He constructed the abode of hand hewn pine lumber and handmade brick from the hands of slave labor. The raised main floor was supported by brick piers joined together with iron bars as a holding lock-up for slaves that were new arrivals from Africa.

Through its history, there were several owners, but greatly distinguished by J.F.H. Claiborne, who is recognized not only for his political prowess, but his detailed documentation of Mississippi history. The colonel is also known as the *Confederate Yankee* because he appeared, both, as a loyal supporter to the Confederate cause while at the same time feeding intelligence to the Yankee officers.

Port Bienville

The 3,600-acre, Hancock County Industrial Park is located at Port Bienville and is supervised by the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission. The biggest project is the giant, $300 million Wellman Inc. plant, which will produce polyethylene terephthalate resin for the food packaging industry in the form of soft drink bottles, and polyester fiber for clothing and home furnishings. Production levels will begin with 550 million pounds of resin and 240 million pounds of fiber a year, with projections for increased growth.

Commission Director Hal Walters anticipates more companies to join the growing family of national enterprises including the GE Plastics Co., Calgon Carbon Corp., Kimberly Clark Corp., Con Tech Power Systems, Eaglebrook Inc., Manufab Inc., Linea Peninsular Inc., Atlas Powder International., PolyChemie, Gulf Coast Fabrication, and Hancock Industries.

Most of the existing tenants are also gearing up for greater expansion programs.

BOOKENDS -- Susan Daigre

When anyone wants to buy a book they go to BOOKENDS. If someone wants to find a book they call Susan Daigre. --And if a writer wants to promote a book they first contact Susan Daigre at BOOKENDS.

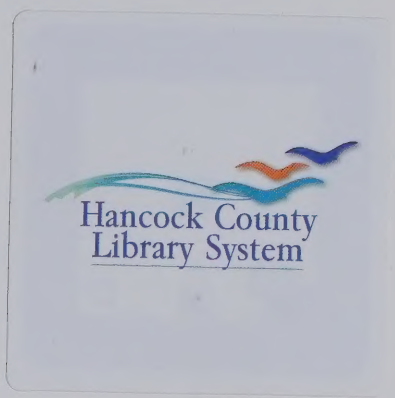
That's the way it is with most folks along the Coast. And that's the way it is at Hancock County's premier bookstore since 1987.

BOOKENDS has been located on the service road which parallels Highway 90 just off Bay Bridge since its inception. In a quaint bungalow style house, couched behind a white picket fence, is where owner Susan Daigre and her capable staff await a steady stream of shoppers. The living room is stacked with current best sellers, the kitchen is loaded with cookbooks, a bedroom is awash with children's books and nursery rhymes, while even the screened-in gallery entrance is piled high in "paperbacks" covering from every period from yesteryear to current releases.

Susan believes in a velvet glove, personal touch to all of her clientele. The bookstore inventories new and used and hard-to-find books, but the added difference is Susan's able assistants who have been indoctrinated in the use of the computer and the telephone to special order or find any out-of-print or out-of-stock book that fancies anyone's need. It has often been said that BOOKENDS has *Something for Everyone, Everywhere!*

Susan and her staff are avid readers and knowledgeable about book fanciers' needs. It all adds up to a place where people regard books with joyful love and respect.

Book authors of national and regional notoriety beat a path to Susan's door, knowing that the enterprising young lady will do her utmost in promoting their book or establishing a book-signing session which not only delights the writer, but also the dedicated patron-following that is part of the mainstay of **BOOKENDS.**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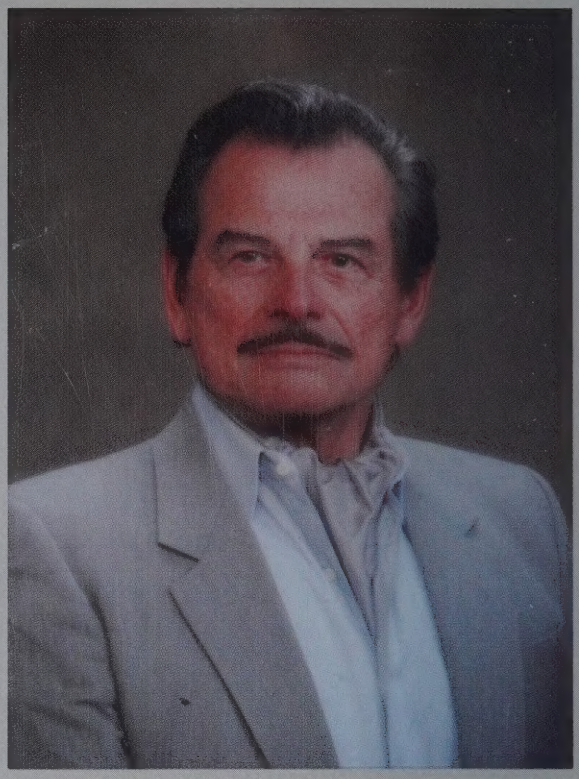
About the Author --

DAN ELLIS



Ellis is noted for many articles on Computer Technology in New Orleans newspapers and in Computer journals. Upon taking permanent residence on the Gulf Coast he has authored articles and books on folklore and historic events. Books he has written about Coast communities are: *"Pass in Revue"*, *"Diamondhead Jubilee"*, *"Jubilee-3, a Commemorative History of St. Paul Parish"*, *"A Panoramic Photograveur of Scenic Drive"*, *"Bay St. Louis-Hancock Tri-Centennial"*, *"Pass Christian - Tri-Centennial"*, *"Gulfport Centennial"*, and *"A Panorama of History and Culture - Mississippi Gulf Coast"*.

A former Educator and business owner, Ellis holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master's degree in Education with extensive graduate work in Sociology and Psychology.

He is in process of completing an historical saga commemorating the Gulf Coast's Tri-Centennial, while continuing research extends into other communities throughout Southern Mississippi communities including the Kiln, Ocean Springs, and the Pascagoulas.

Active with the Coast Chamber of Commerce and a former member of its Board of Directors, he was signaled out by "Coast Business" for its Who's Who for 1995. --He is also a contributing Writer to several books and magazines and is the Editor for the *AARP Mississippi Newsletter*. His style of writing is light and easy while his research is pursued with in-depth scrutiny for cautious authenticity in Historical Correctness.